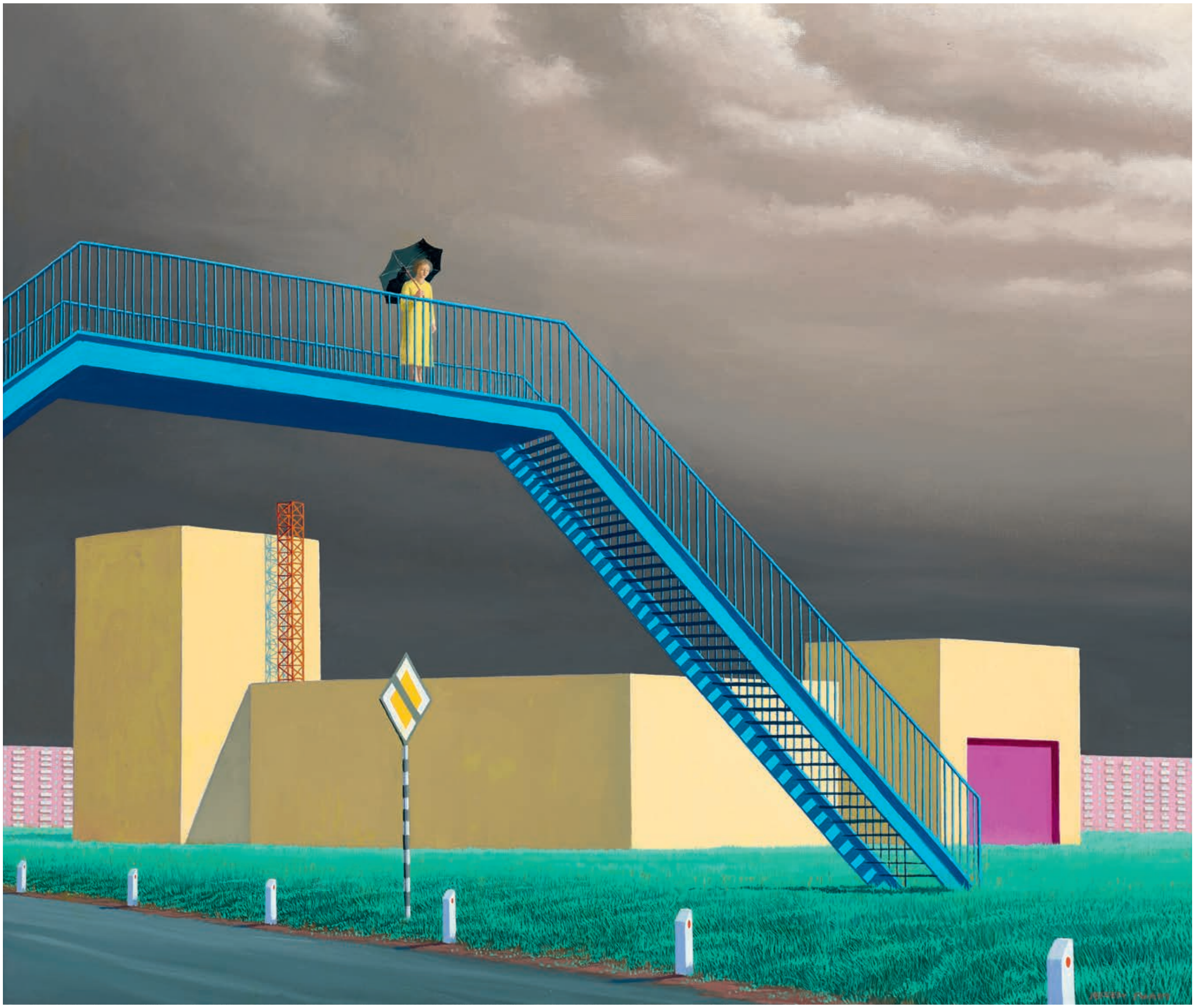

NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK COLLECTION

Highlights of Australian Art

AUCTION • MELBOURNE • 22 FEBRUARY 2022

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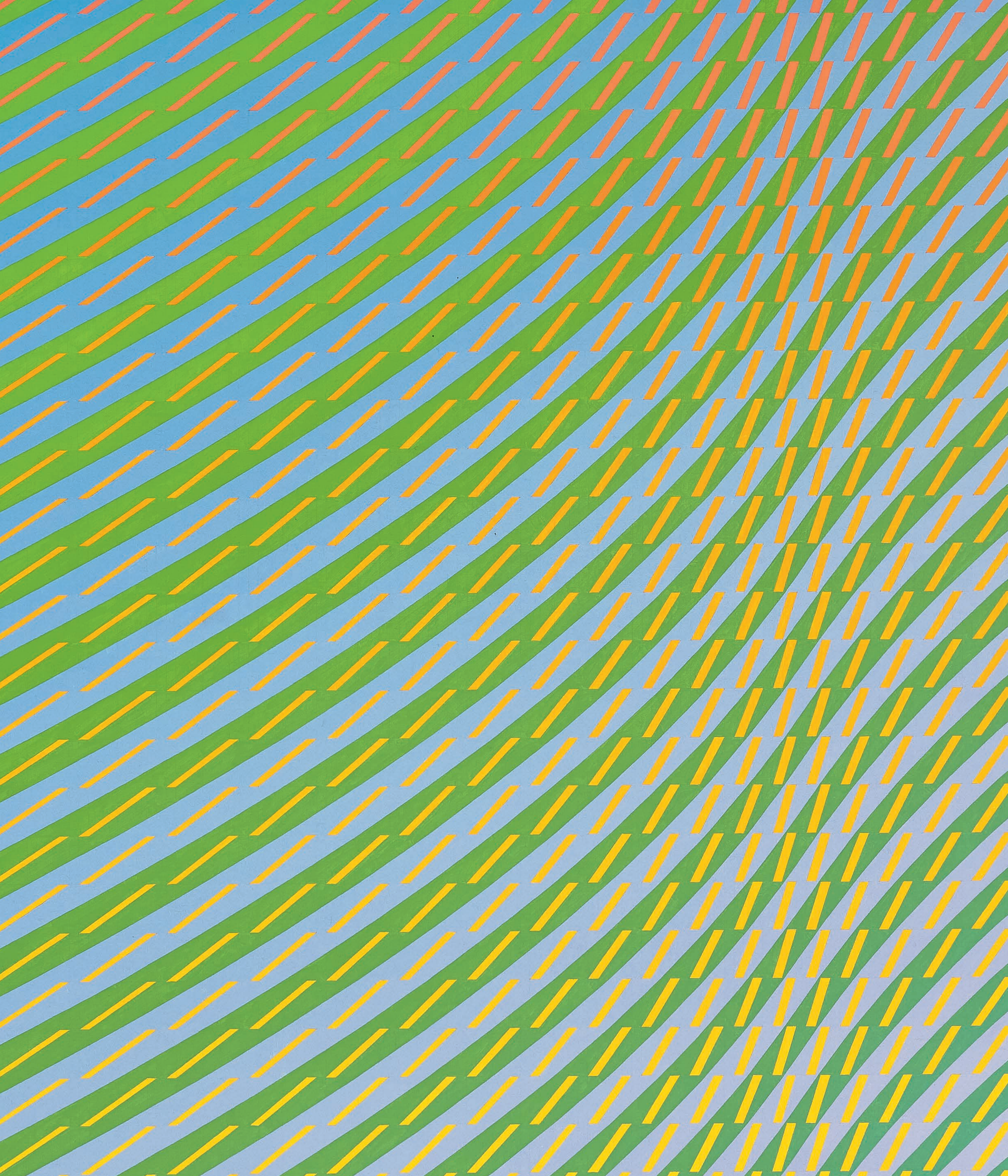
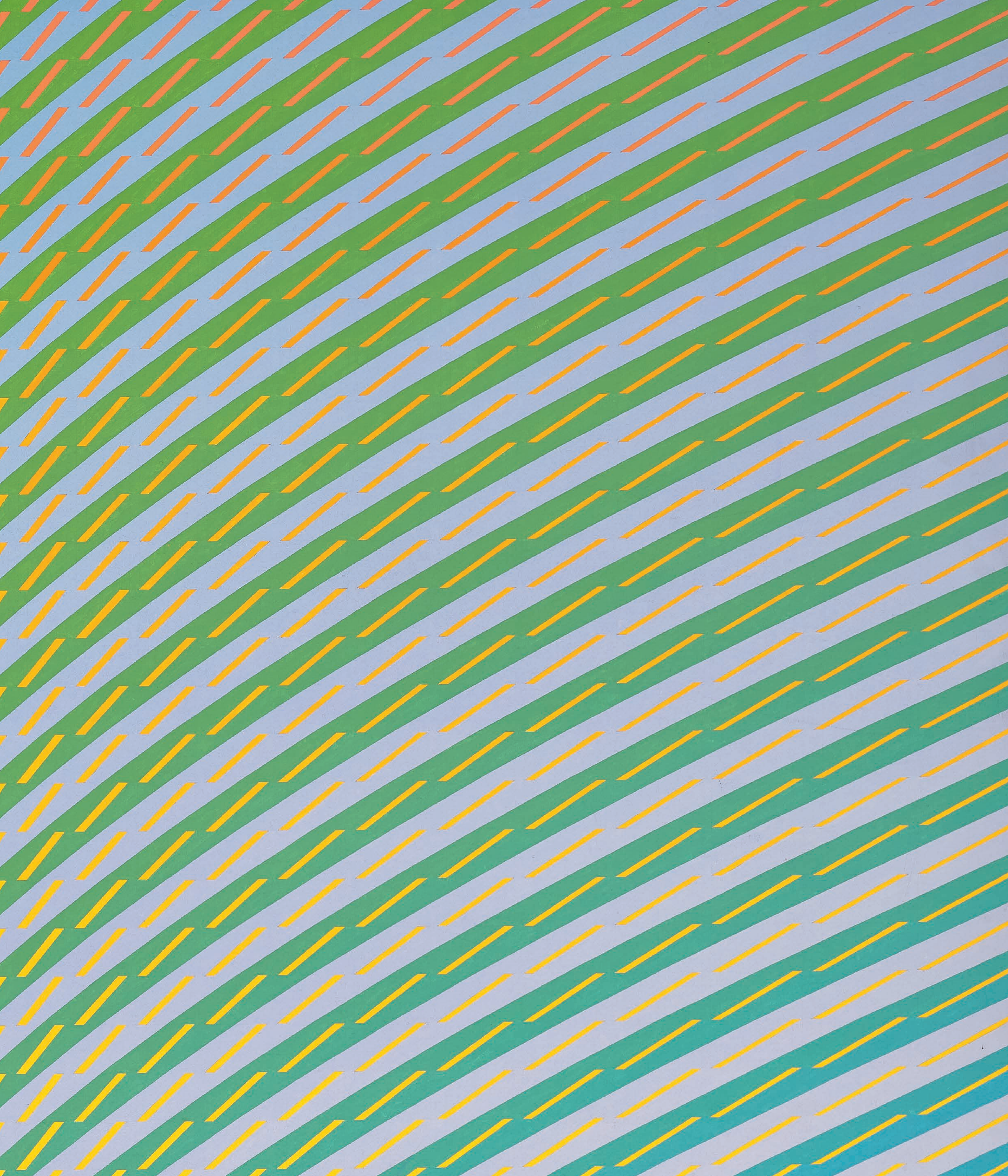
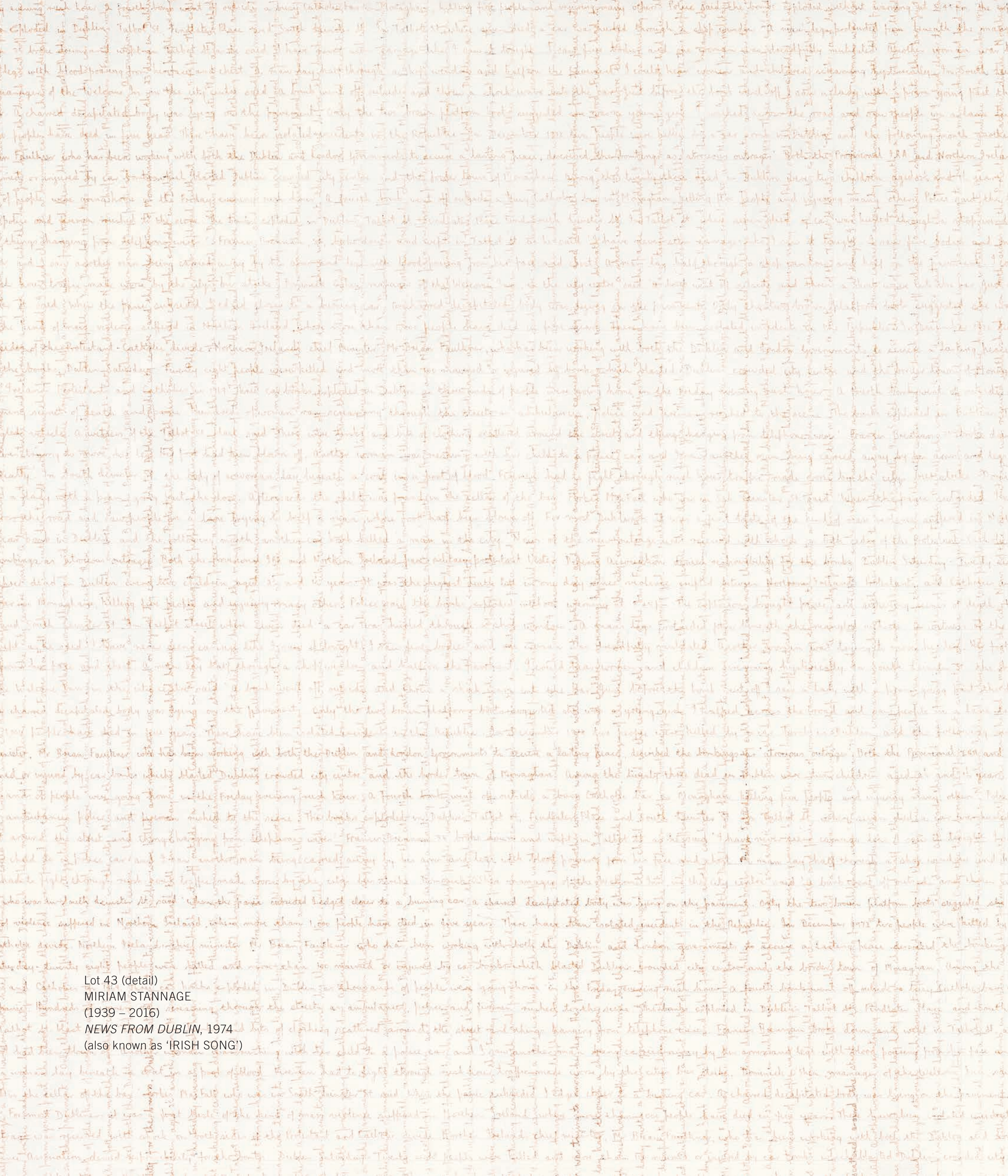






Lot 43 (detail)
MIRIAM STANNAGE
(1939 – 2016)
NEWS FROM DUBLIN, 1974
(also known as 'IRISH SONG')

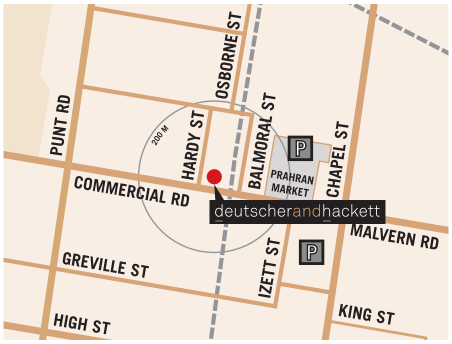
NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK COLLECTION

Highlights of Australian Art

Lots 1 – 73

deutscherandhackett

AUCTION • MELBOURNE • 22 FEBRUARY 2022


PUNT RD
OSBORNE ST
200 M
HARDY ST
BALMORAL ST
P
PRAHRAN MARKET
CHAPEL ST
COMMERCIAL RD
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P
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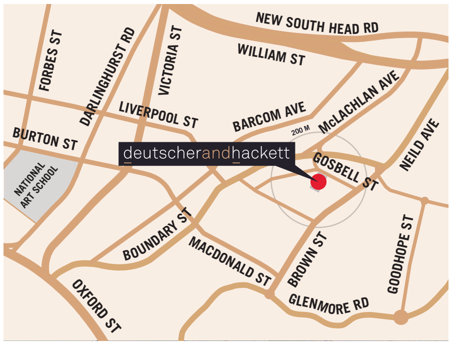
NEW SOUTH HEAD RD
WILLIAM ST
FORBES ST
DARLINGHURST RD
VICTORIA ST
LIVERPOOL ST
BARCOM AVE
200 M
McLACHLAN AVE
NEILD AVE
BURTON ST
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melbourne auction

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south yarra, vic
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sydney viewing

TUESDAY 8 – SUNDAY 13 FEBRUARY
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paddington, nsw
telephone: 02 9287 0600
11:00 am – 6:00 pm

melbourne viewing

THURSDAY 17 – MONDAY 21 FEBRUARY
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south yarra, vic
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11:00 am – 6:00 pm

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fax: 03 9865 6344
telephone bid form – p. 221
absentee bid form – p. 222

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specialists

CHRIS DEUTSCHER

executive director — melbourne

Chris is a graduate of Melbourne University and has over 40 years art dealing, auction and valuation experience as Director of Deutscher Fine Art and subsequently as co-founder and Executive Director of Deutscher~Menzies. He has extensively advised private, corporate and museum art collections and been responsible for numerous Australian art publications and landmark exhibitions.
He is also an approved valuer under the Cultural Gifts Program.

FIONA HAYWARD

senior art specialist

After completing a Bachelor of Arts at Monash University, Fiona worked at Niagara Galleries in Melbourne, leaving to join the newly established Melbourne auction rooms of Christie's in 1990, rising to become an Associate Director. In 2006, Fiona joined Sotheby's International as a Senior Paintings Specialist and later Deputy Director. In 2009, Sotheby's International left the Australian auction market and established a franchise agreement with Sotheby's Australia, where Fiona remained until the end of 2019 as a Senior Specialist in Australian Art. At the end of the franchise agreement with Sotheby's Australia, Smith & Singer was established where Fiona worked until the end of 2020.

CRISPIN GUTTERIDGE

head of aboriginal art and senior art specialist

Crispin holds a Bachelor of Arts (Visual Arts and History) from Monash University. In 1995, he began working for Sotheby's Australia, where he became the representative for Aboriginal art in Melbourne. In 2006 Crispin joined Joel Fine Art as head of Aboriginal and Contemporary Art and later was appointed head of the Sydney office. He possesses extensive knowledge of Aboriginal art and has over 20 years experience in the Australian fine art auction market.

ALEX CRESWICK

head of finance

With a Bachelor of Business Accounting at RMIT, Alex has almost 25 years experience within financial management roles. He has spent much of his early years within the corporate sector with companies such as IBM, Macquarie Bank and ANZ. With a strong passion for the arts more recently he was the Financial Controller for Ross Mollison Group, a leading provider of marketing services to the performing arts.

CLAIRE KURZMANN

head of online sales, gallery manager - melbourne

Claire has a Bachelor of Fine Arts (Visual Art) from the University of Melbourne. She gained several years' experience working as Gallery Assistant at Metro Gallery, Melbourne, assisting with exhibitions, events and marketing. She has acted as Artist Liaison for the Arts Centre Melbourne, coordinating aspects of artist care and has gained experience as a Studio Assistant for a number of emerging Australian artists.

ROGER McILROY

head auctioneer

Roger was the Chairman, Managing Director and auctioneer for Christie's Australia and Asia from 1989 to 2006, having joined the firm in London in 1977. He presided over many significant auctions, including Alan Bond's Dallhold Collection (1992) and The Harold E. Mertz Collection of Australian Art (2000). Since 2006, Roger has built a highly distinguished art consultancy in Australian and International works of art. Roger will continue to independently operate his privately-owned art dealing and consultancy business alongside his role at Deutscher and Hackett.

specialists

DAMIAN HACKETT

executive director — sydney

Damian has over 30 years experience in public and commercial galleries and the fine art auction market. After completing a BA (Visual Arts) at the University of New England, he was Assistant Director of the Gold Coast City Art Gallery and in 1993 joined Rex Irwin Art Dealer, a leading commercial gallery in Sydney. In 2001, Damian moved into the fine art auction market as Head of Australian and International art for Phillips de Pury and Luxembourg, and from 2002 – 2006 was National Director of Deutscher~Menzies.

HENRY MULHOLLAND

senior art specialist

Henry Mulholland is a graduate of the National Art School in Sydney, and has had a successful career as an exhibiting artist. Since 2000, Henry has also been a regular art critic on ABC Radio 702. He was artistic advisor to the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust Basil Sellers Sculpture Project, and since 2007 a regular feature of Sculpture by the Sea, leading tours for corporate stakeholders and conducting artist talks in Sydney, Tasmania and New Zealand. Prior to joining Deutscher & Hackett, Henry's fine art consultancy provided a range of services, with a particular focus on collection management and acquiring artworks for clients on the secondary market.

LUCIE REEVES-SMITH

contemporary art specialist and gallery manager – sydney

Lucie completed her studies in Belgium, obtaining Masters of Arts in Art History (Modern and Contemporary Art), together with a Bachelors of Art History, Archaeology and Musicology from the Université Catholique de Louvain. Since returning to Australia in 2014, she has gained sound experience in cataloguing, research and arts writing through various roles with the Museum of Contemporary Art Australia, S.H. Ervin Gallery, Casula Powerhouse Arts Centre and with private art advisory firms Tutela Capital and LoveArt International.

VERONICA ANGELATOS

art specialist and senior researcher

Veronica has a Master of Arts (Art Curatorship and Museum Management), together with a Bachelor of Arts/Law (Honours) and Diploma of Modern Languages from the University of Melbourne. She has strong curatorial and research expertise, having worked at various art museums including the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice and National Gallery of Victoria, and more recently, in the commercial sphere as Senior Art Specialist at Deutscher~Menzies. She is also the author of numerous articles and publications on Australian and International Art.

ELLA PERROTTET

registrar

Ella has a Bachelor of Fine Art (Visual Art) from Monash University and studied in both Melbourne and Italy. From 2014, Ella worked at Leonard Joel, Melbourne as an Art Assistant, researcher, writer and auctioneer, where she developed a particular interest in Australian women artists. She is currently studying a Masters of Business (Arts and Cultural Management) at Deakin University with a focus on collection management and research.

SCOTT LIVESEY

auctioneer

Scott Livesey began his career in fine art with Leonard Joel Auctions from 1988 to 1994 before moving to Sotheby's Australia in 1994, as auctioneer and specialist in Australian Art. Scott founded his eponymous gallery in 2000, which represents both emerging and established contemporary Australian artists, and includes a regular exhibition program of indigenous Art. Along with running his contemporary art gallery, Scott has been an auctioneer for Deutscher and Hackett since 2010.

deutscherandhackett

specialists for this auction

Chris Deutscher
0411 350 150

Damian Hackett
0422 811 034

Henry Mulholland
0424 487 738

Fiona Hayward
0417 957 590

Crispin Gutteridge
0411 883 052

Lucie Reeves-Smith
0401 177 007

Veronica Angelatos
0409 963 094

AUCTIONEERS

Roger McIlroy
Scott Livesey

ADMINISTRATION AND ACCOUNTS

Alex Creswick (Melbourne)
03 9865 6333

Lucie Reeves-Smith (Sydney)
02 9287 0600

ABSENTEE AND TELEPHONE BIDS

Eliza Burton
03 9865 6333

SHIPPING

Ella Perrottet
03 9865 6333

CATALOGUE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Eliza Burton
03 9865 6333

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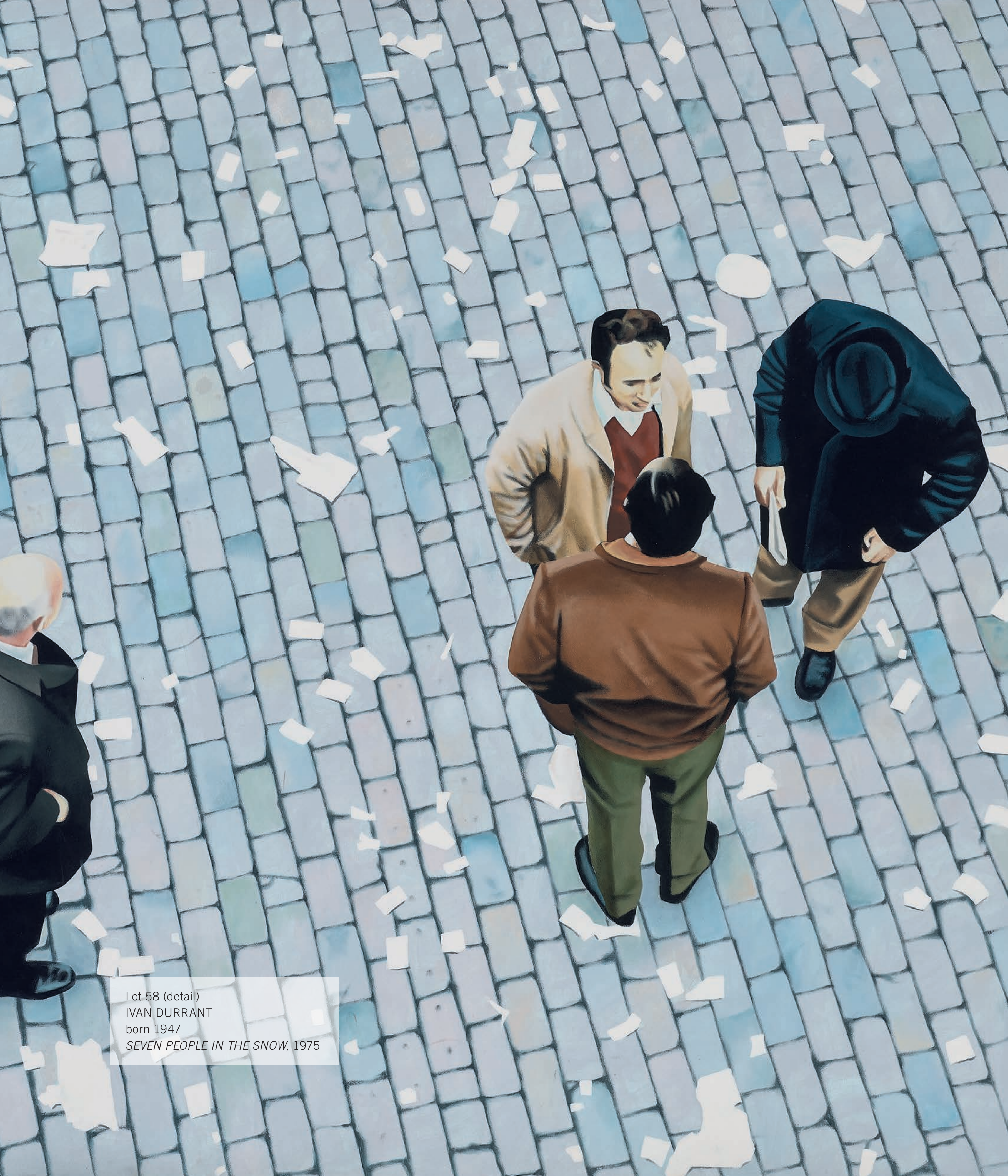
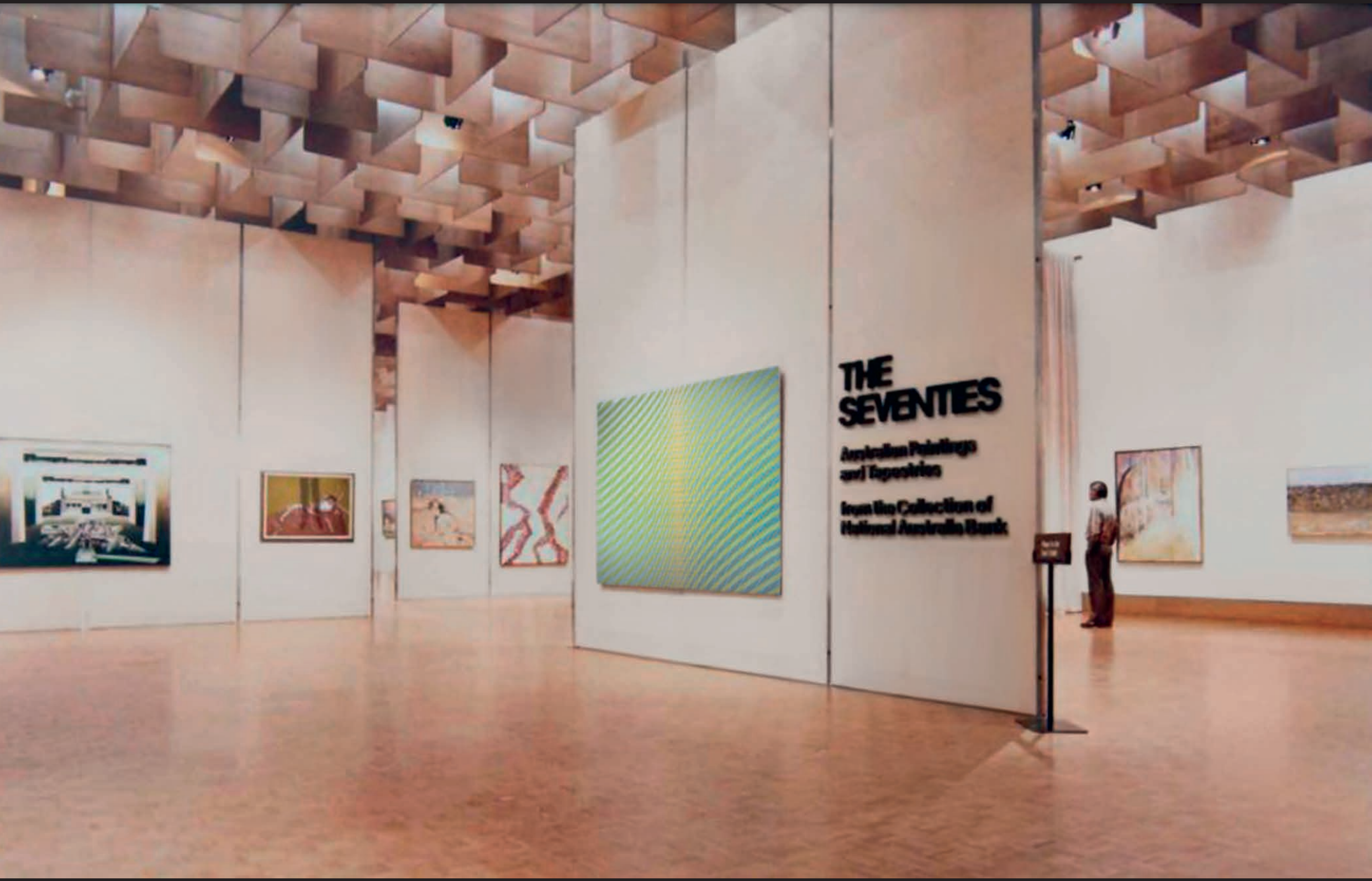
2016



Lot 58 (detail)
IVAN DURRANT
born 1947
SEVEN PEOPLE IN THE SNOW, 1975


THE SEVENTIES
Australian Paintings and Tapestries
from the Collection of National Australia Bank

Installation view of 'The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank', National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Lesley Dumbrell, *Chinook*, centre
Jan Senbergs, *The Gate Beyond the Gate*, far left
John Brack, *Through the Window*, second from left
John Olsen, *Approaching Storm*, third from left
Richard Larter, *Shift*, fourth from left

NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK COLLECTION

Highlights of Australian Art

PREFACE

In the early 1970s, NAB began to acquire Australian artworks that celebrated the diversity and depth of modern Australian artistic vision. Over the subsequent decades, NAB's collection has given art appreciators a unique glimpse into some of the very best examples of our country's contemporary art. Featuring more than 2,000 works, the collection includes examples from some the country's most recognised artists including Frederick McCubbin, Sidney Nolan, Arthur Streeton, John Brack, Jeffrey Smart and John Olsen.

However, while many of these artworks are quite historically important, they are not significant to NAB's history. Although the art is appreciated, it is clearly not core to NAB's role as a bank supporting customers, and accordingly, in early 2021 NAB made the decision to sell the vast majority of the Australian art collection and reinvest funds back into the community via the NAB Foundation.

This builds on the NAB Ready Together program to support Australians before, during and after natural disasters. All proceeds of the sale will be donated to the NAB Foundation supporting community grants that help prepare people, communities and our environment for natural disasters, and support long-term recovery and resilience work. As NAB Group Chief Operating Officer, Les Matheson, notes

'We're constantly driven to find new ways to help our customers and communities prosper. Proceeds from this sale will go back into the community, helping the NAB Foundation provide grants over coming years. At a time when Australia's climate is changing, communities and the environment face increased risk from natural disasters, these funds will allow us to do even more to help.

By redirecting these profits into the NAB Foundation, the funds will contribute to the Foundation's grant programs to further safeguard local and regional communities and fund projects that will support our economic recovery and ensure Australia is more prepared for natural disasters and climate change.

We hope this work will help the communities and customers we serve and make a real difference at a critical time for the nation's economic recovery from COVID-19 and the extreme bushfire and weather events of 2020.'

more
than
money

nab

National Australia Bank 'Seventies Collection'

Artistically, the decade of the 1970s was a period of excitement and confidence with a cultural buoyancy underpinned by a period of strong economic prosperity. In Melbourne, the new building for the National Gallery of Victoria had recently opened (August 1968) with *The Field* exhibition presenting, with great conviction, a new contemporary international style within the context of the post-war generation of artists coming into their artistic maturity. Above all, as the seventies unfolded, there was a celebration of stylistic plurality in contemporary Australian art.

This plurality was in part energized, monetarised, and sustained by the excitement of an immersion in contemporary art. During the 1960s, one of the significant forms of patronage had been through art prizes, including major national prizes such as the Archibald Prize at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, and a plethora of smaller regional art prizes hosted by municipal councils and societies. Private patronage for contemporary art was highlighted when the newly formed magazine *Art and Australia* (May 1963), in its initial editions ran a series of articles highlighting private collections in Australia, including those of James Fairfax, Aubrey Gibson, and Margaret Carnegie, which ranged across the history of Australian art, but also emphasised the vitality of contemporary art.

The emphasis and promotion of private and corporate collections during the 1970s saw the rise of a new group – including the Besen and the JGL collections among others – that had a significant focus on contemporary art. As well, many corporate collections such as the ANZ, Elders IXL, and Westfarmers, with a strong emphasis on historical art began to move towards a representation of contemporary art.

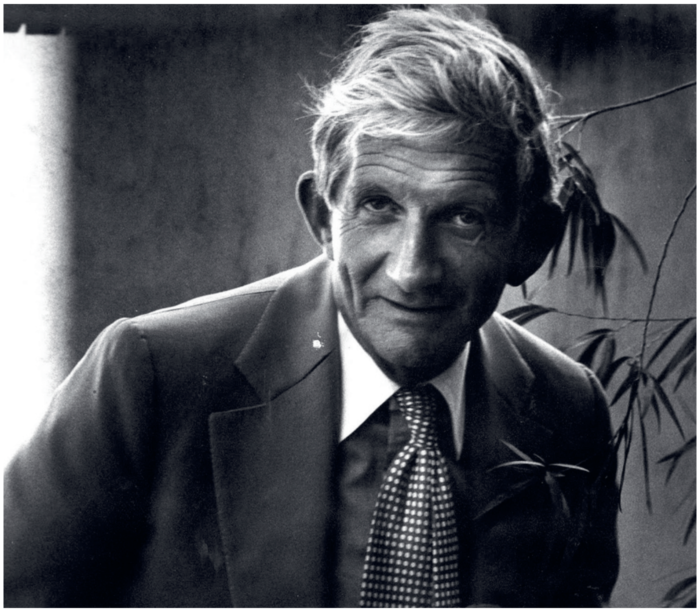
The establishment of the Australia Council in 1973, and as a statutory body in 1975, introduced support for artists through grants, access to overseas studios, and support for exhibitions. The federal and state governments also increased support for public galleries, and helped develop a regional gallery network focused on contemporary art acquisitions, exhibitions, and the development of art schools. Art acquisitions and lectureships also provided artists with financial confidence and career professionalism that engendered the ambition to achieve. The commercial gallery dealer networks also began to evolve with a program of regular artist solo exhibitions that helped establish career credibility and continuity. Combined with the *imprimatur* of art museum acquisitions, the 1970s cemented a sense of confidence in contemporary Australian art that was consolidated by the auction houses creating a secondary market for contemporary art.

Within this context, the entity that would emerge as the *National Australia Bank* began its collection of the art of the 1970s. Little over a decade later, there was an exuberant celebration at the opening of the exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria of *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries- from the collection of the National Australia Bank* in 1982. It was also the first time the public would formally learn the new name and seven-pointed star logo of Australia's newest bank – the *National Australia Bank*, which had come into existence in 1982 with the merger of the National Commercial Bank of Melbourne and the Commercial Banking Company of Sydney, an entity which was rebadged during 1983.

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries exhibition, held at the NGV from 15 October to 28 November 1982, consisted of 102 paintings displayed in the Temporary Exhibitions Gallery and six tapestries woven by the Victorian Tapestry Workshop displayed in the Great Hall. The National Australia Bank Art Committee was established in 1975 for the collection; its formation being indicative of the bank's increased support of the arts, and in particular of visual art. It echoed the visionary engagement of the Art Committee's chair, Sir Andrew Grimwade, then a Director of NAB, who in 1976, also accepted the role of President of the NGV Council of Trustees.

The Art Committee appointed the eminent art dealer, Georges Mora as its art consultant. Although during the 70s art included a complex field of activities encompassing a wide range of genres such as Conceptual and Process Art, Performance Art, Environmental and Land Art, Video and Film Art, Art Language and Community Art, it was decided that the focus for the NAB collection would be paintings exclusively from the 1970s decade. It aimed to select across painting styles, both abstract and figurative, the most outstanding examples by well-established, mid-career, and young emerging painters, and as such would represent a microcosm of the best paintings of the decade.

Georges Mora was a very appropriate choice as a consultant; he had arrived in Melbourne in 1951 with his artist wife Mirka, from Paris, via New York. As a glamorous couple, they soon established a Parisian-style coffee lounge that morphed into the Mirka Café, which became a centre for the Melbourne avant-garde. Later their Café Balzac in East Melbourne also became the gathering place for many of Australia's most significant contemporary artists. In 1956 Georges was elected President of the Contemporary Art Society and two years later together with John and Sunday Reed, he transformed the CAS Gallery into the fledgling Museum of Modern Art (and Design) of Australia, which in 1981 was established at the Reed's Heidelberg rural property as the Museum of Modern Art at Heide. The Reeds were a formative influence on Australian art from the 1930s onwards, closely associated with Sidney Nolan, Albert Tucker, Joy Hester, John Perceval, and the Angry Penguins group.



Georges Mora

In 1965 Georges established the Tolarno Restaurant and Gallery in St Kilda, which became a pre-eminent centre for contemporary art, showing many of the new generation of abstract artists who featured in the inaugural 1968 NGV exhibition *The Field*. The Moras' modernist house in Aspendale, which shared a common courtyard with the Reeds' beach house, regularly hosted luncheons featuring artists from the Heide group, as well as a wide variety of contemporary figures including Charles Blackman, John Olsen, Asher Bilu, Martin Sharp and Ivan Durrant. It was with this background, and his commitment to contemporary art and acknowledged expertise, that Georges Mora assembled the *National Australia Bank Seventies Collection*.

Australian art during the 1970s has often been characterised by the activities that happened in Sydney and Melbourne, which can be encapsulated in the two pre-eminent artists of the period – Brett Whiteley and Fred Williams. In Sydney, Whiteley epitomised the flamboyant bohemian artist whose fluid calligraphic style aimed at capturing the hedonism of contemporary pop culture; while in Melbourne, Fred Williams' disciplined and methodical approach produced abstracted, encoded landscapes that reveal a figurative authority in his use of line, placement, and gesture with a visual schema that has influenced the way we now view the Australian landscape.

History is a convenient set of generalisations, simplified to give an easy overview. A continuous subtext within the history of art is the challenge of the old by the new. During the twentieth century, it was the pastorale that gave way to the urban, and figuration was challenged by abstraction. Although the 70s has been characterised as a period of plurality, the ongoing subtext was regional Australian imagery, versus the new international abstract.

Although the Sydney/Melbourne dialogue dominates in the *National Australia Bank Seventies* Collection, other centres have contributed significant works to the collection. For example, Western Australia is represented by the landscapes of Robert Juniper, Guy Grey-Smith, and George Haynes, and a painting based on a grid/system/repetition compositional schema by Miriam Stannage; Queensland is represented by landscape painters Lawrence Daws and Ray Crooke; while South Australia is represented by its then expatriate painters Sydney Ball and

Alun Leach-Jones, both representing the new abstraction that emerged from New York in the 1960s. Ball's lyrical abstraction is concerned with thick washes and stains of pure colour, while Leach-Jones with a Colorfield heritage of crafted, crisp hard edges of pure colour, plays with *trompe l'oeil* patterns.

One of the most important contemporary South Australian artists, who settled permanently in Italy in 1965, was Jeffrey Smart. As an urban realist painter, with echoes of Orwellian dystopia, he captured the feeling of the cool ethos of a modern metropolis. His use of intense colours and precise repeating geometry, stylised from realist patterns of often deserted cityscapes, adds a surreal quality and tension to his work. In Melbourne his counterpart is Rick Amor who brings a Melbournian ethereal, tonal quality to his paintings, often with silent figures watching from deep shadows and darkened windows.

The wide variety of styles within the various genres in the *NAB Seventies Collection* are well illustrated by the various depictions of Sydney Harbour. These include the more traditional, yet expressive approach of Lloyd Rees, and the painterly, evocative, and semi-abstracted seascapes by John Firth-Smith, that merges watery effects with the schema of the hull and waterline of ocean tankers. Another Sydney artist who is also a master of the painterly line telling a story, is John Olsen. His line tracks across the landscape, journeying past painterly emblems and calligraphic symbols, like a diarist recording elements of the 'you beaut country'.

The theme of the city is well represented in the *NAB Seventies Collection*, including Michael Shannon's wintery architectural skyline of Melbourne, and the more intimate shopfront still-life painting of John Brack. Interested in the potential of disquiet and the anomaly of the elaborate window display of reflective stainless-steel cooking utensils, Brack animates this scene with multiple self-portraits on the utensils' reflective surfaces. Brack sought to imbue his work, about daily rituals and urban activities, with a stylised formal geometry, a timeless classicism, against the gestural emotional romanticism of the moment. Common objects thus served as analogies for complex intellectual and philosophical statements.

In his youth John Brack had shared a studio with Fred Williams, and they remained friends throughout their life. Williams, like Brack, was conscious of the cultural heritage of their past, but he took on the challenge and the tradition of landscape, a genre that had dominated the history of Australian art. Williams observed that unlike European landscapes which seem to naturally compose themselves into picturesque scenes, in Australia 'you have to invent your focal points'. He used lines, both actual and implied, to structure his landscapes. This he did especially with water – riverbanks, shorelines, forest ponds, swamps, waterfalls, eroded creek beds, and river gorges; in short, his lines and abstract patterns follow the patterns of water distribution. The abstract expressionist calligraphy representing trees in his famous *You Yang* series corresponds to the water distribution in valleys in the semi-arid scrubland around outer Melbourne.

Many artists represented in the *NAB Seventies Collection* were mid-career artists. Georges Mora's familiarity with the Heide circle and its journal *Angry Penguins* that influenced many Melbourne artists in the 1940s, gave him access to many well-established, mid-career painters of the time. They include Sidney Nolan, who had painted the 'Ned Kelly series' in the mid-1940s, and to international acclaim, continued to look towards history and myth to illustrate his profound experiences of the Australian outback. Arthur Boyd too, after a series of expressive painterly images of war-afflicted cripples in suburban Melbourne, turned to biblical themes, using old master techniques, to imbue his paintings with a strong spiritual ethos. By the 1970s his focus turned back towards the Australian bush, depicting sapling landscapes of blue and gold, best characterized by his images of the bush around the Shoalhaven River.

Albert Tucker, like Nolan and Boyd, was part of the Reed circle at Heide. In the 1940s he painted a series of 'Images of Modern Evil' which avoided literary myths in preference for aggressive, socially expressionist images of war-time society, before he left Melbourne for a decade overseas. While in Italy he developed the 'Antipodean Head' series of paintings which featured a rugged, highly-textured, earth-coloured head in profile. Symbolically these heads represent the harshness of the Australian climate and its effects on its inhabitants.

Also associated with the group was John Perceval who, likewise, had a spontaneous painterly technique which in later landscape works also incorporated thick impasto surface textures echoing his early admiration for the work of Vincent Van Gogh.

A generation later Sydney artist, Martin Sharp also looked to Van Gogh as a source of artistic inspiration. Sharp who was highly influential in the formation of Sydney Pop Art, was co-founder of OZ Magazine to which he contributed numerous cartoons and illustrations, designed to transcend the barrier between fine art and popular culture. By the seventies, his focus was 'looking after', revitalizing and reinterpreting, a number of popular culture icons, ranging from Tiny Tim to Vincent Van Gogh.

In Melbourne, Ivan Durrant had a similar interest in popular culture. He employed and emulated photography in his paintings, as well as spectacularly manipulating contemporary media to publicise his art statements. Photography as a device was also used by other artists such as Jan Senbergs who incorporated photo-stencil silkscreen printing onto his canvas to give texture and detail to his painted images and further enhance the surreal, industrial feel of his landscapes.
Fellow Melbournian, Leonard French used a semi-figurative geometry, based on Christian-Byzantine symbolism of the cross and fire, to evoke a spiritual force of war and social revolution; while Roger Kemp evolved an elaborate personal iconography of circles and crosses to represent his metaphysical view of the world.

The NAB Seventies Collection also represents the art of the cool – abstracts with crisp hard edges and flat areas of colour, as in the works by Michael Johnson and Lesley Dumbrell. Johnson said of his work, 'the edge is where the colour meets, not where the shapes change … the shape is the container of colour'; for him it was all about colour relationships. For Dumbrell the heritage of the intricate patterning and carefully calibrated colour, as seen in her work *Chinook* 1975, which was reproduced on the cover of *The Seventies* catalogue, lies in Op Art. The title *Chinook*, named after a North American wind, references the optical vibrations across the surface of the canvas.

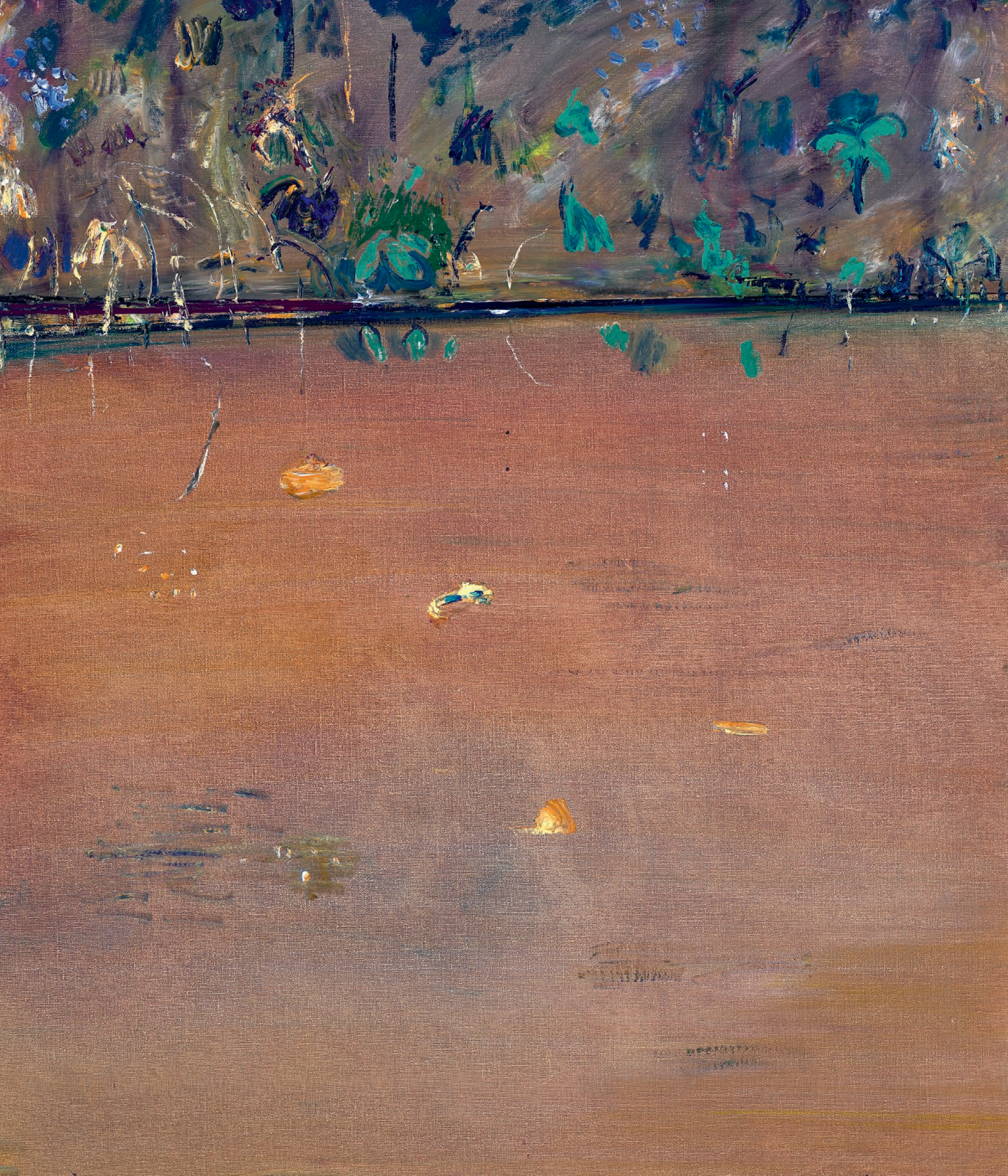
The interest generated by the *National Australia Bank: The Seventies Collection* through its distribution throughout the bank head office and display in its various bank branches – and culminating in the exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria – led to the NAB extending its support for contemporary art. In the words of NAB Chairman Sir Rupert Clarke, the bank 'was predisposed to support contemporary Australian Art', and again, Georges Mora was commissioned to commence acquisitions for a new collection titled *Rivers in Australian Art*.

Opening at the Museum of Modern Art at Heide in October 1991, the *Rivers in Australian Art* collection consisted of 30 works, and as the title implies, selected around the theme of rivers. A number of artists are represented in both *National Australia Bank* collections, such as Rick Amor, Howard Arkley, Peter Booth, Arthur Boyd, William Delafield Cook, John Olsen, and Richard Larter. Many of these artists in the 'Rivers collection' had further refined their early style, such as Delafield Cook who had moved from Photorealist work inspired by the pioneering photographer Henry Fox Talbot to a highly detailed Romantic realism; while others such as Howard Arkley had moved from his early Minimalist abstracts to a colourful figurative style which demonstrated his mastery of the airbrush technique. Peter Booth represented in *The Seventies* collection by an expressionistic impasto abstract of 1975, produced for the 'Rivers collection' an image of a river where its painterly flow is enhanced by his dynamic brushwork and fluid surface texture.

Through its patronage, the *National Australia Bank* has supported, significantly encouraged, and promoted contemporary Australian art, and indeed, *The Seventies Collection* is a treasure-trove containing all the major painters of the period. In these changing times, the cultural role of the bank has been redefined, paralleling a similar shift in contemporary art towards a wider community involvement and support.

ROBERT LINDSAY

Robert Lindsay was the Senior Curator of Contemporary Art at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne from 1975 – 1990, during which time he organised the exhibition *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of the National Australia Bank* in 1982.
He currently works as a freelance curator and writer in Melbourne.



NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK COLLECTION

Highlights of Australian Art

LOT 1 – 73

Lot 7 (detail)
FRED WILLIAMS
(1927 – 1982)
FOREST POND, 1974

1

RALPH BALSON

(1890 – 1964)
NON–OBJECTIVE PAINTING, 1958
oil on composition board
76.0 x 100.5 cm
signed and dated lower right: R Balson. 58.

ESTIMATE: $60,000 – 80,000

PROVENANCE
Private collection
Christie's, Melbourne, 6 March 1970, lot 101 (as 'Abstract')
The National Australia Bank Art Collection (label attached verso)

Non-Objective Painting was completed in 1958, a particularly auspicious year in Australian abstract painter Ralph Balson's period of the same name. This series of paintings, in opposition to the geometric works that had preceded them, consisted of veils of carefully dappled and modulated colour, evenly spread all-over the hardboard support. Many of the best examples of this distinctive style, all dating from late 1950s, were acquired for public collections, including *Painting*, 1957 (National Gallery of Australia); *Painting,* 1958 (Art Gallery of New South Wales); *Non-Objective Painting*, 1958 (Art Gallery of South Australia); and *Non-Objective Painting*, 1958 (National Gallery of Victoria).

Throughout his career, Ralph Balson tirelessly sought a process of abstract painting that would respect the physical qualities of paint while illustrating what he would call the 'ineffable': the sublime and invisible forces of the universe.[1] This pursuit led him through a disciplined, logical progression of different styles of abstract painting – from the planar geometry of his 'Constructive' works, to painterly fragmentation in the 'Non-Objective' paintings, and finally, the poured 'Matter Paintings'. In 1955, corresponding with a change in personal circumstance, Balson was finally liberated from the impersonal rigour of his previous styles and allowed himself to embrace the ever-changing fluidity of the universe, in the form of abstract impressionism. The fact that Balson would later return to this style in the final years of his life attests to his appreciation of its artistic resolution and its singular ability to encapsulate his radical ideas. While Balson was notably well-read in the developments of international abstract art, in particular American Action Painting and European *tachisme*, the density and fluidity of his non-objective surfaces instead sought to emulate in paint the experimental stream-of-consciousness literary style of James Joyce.[2]

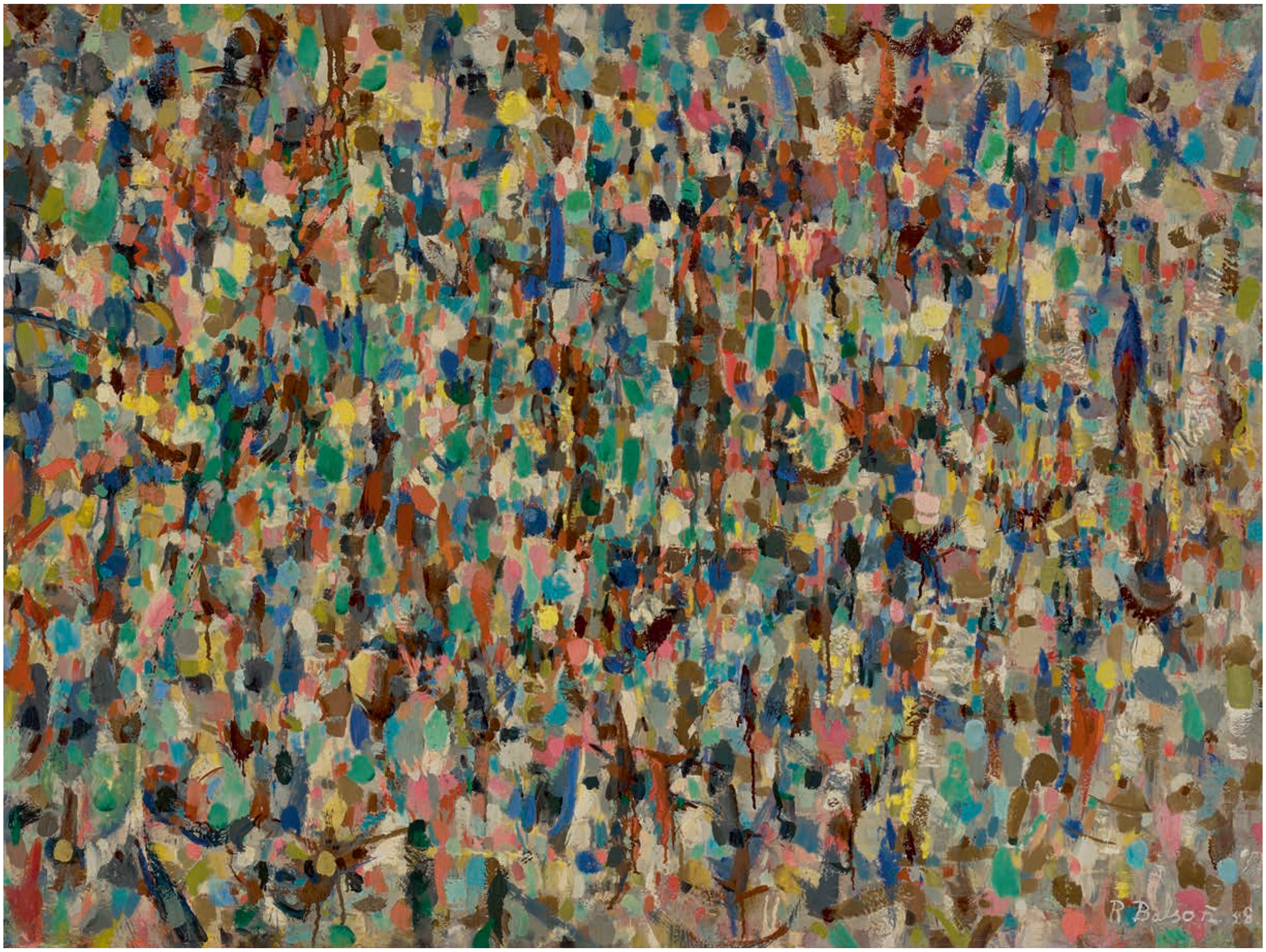
The dramatic adoption of a fractured, kaleidoscopic surface was prefigured in Balson's pastel works on paper, which were first exhibited at Macquarie Galleries in Sydney in 1952. James Gleeson described these works on paper as a 'descent into a fantastic and delightful jungle […] forms are shattered into a thousand particles which are disposed over the surface in patterns of great complexity and variety.'[3]

This *Non-Objective Painting* represents a vision of the infinite through a complex and vibrant web of layered staccato marks. With a wide variety of brushstrokes, Balson has distributed the colours throughout this composition with the utmost care, associating unexpected colour variations and variating brushstroke orientation to create a delicate vibrating motion. With no clear focal point, the marks of the finely mottled surface coalesce in the centre and dissipate towards the edges of the support. The eye is drawn around the painting, attracted by joyful and bold tonal associations, such as stippled highlights of white, cobalt and cadmium red, or dashes of burnt umber subtly dripping beneath lighter and brighter daubs. *Non-Objective Painting* is a superb example of Balson's impressionist and increasingly gestural interpretation of the underlying fabric of the universe.

While he remained for most of his life quietly removed from the social scene of the Sydney art world, examples of Balson's works were featured in major collections and exhibitions during his lifetime. It was in the early 1970s, however, thanks to the efforts of Grace Crowley, the artist's son William Balson, art historians Daniel Thomas and Bernard Smith, and the crucial memorial exhibitions presented at Sydney's Gallery A, that an appreciation of Balson's role in Australian art was consummated. The second memorial exhibition in 1967 presented at Gallery A included no fewer than thirty examples of Balson's Non-Objective paintings.[4] The acquisition of Non-Objective paintings by the NGV, AGNSW, AGSA and NGA were all made between 1968 and 1973, and at the forefront of fashion, this example was acquired for the National Australia Bank collection in March 1970.

1. Adams, B., 'Metaphors of Scientific Idealism: The theoretical background to the paintings of Ralph Balson' in Bradley, A. and Smith, T. (eds.), *Australian Art and Architecture: Essays presented to Bernard Smith*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1980, p. 188
2. Balson, 1956, Pacific Loan exhibition catalogue, in Thomas, D., 'Ralph Balson', *Art and Australia*, vol.2, no.4, Sydney, March 1965, p. 258
3. Gleeson, J., 'Abstract Art Show Exciting', *The Sun*, Sydney, 21 May 1952, p. 48
4. Thomas, D., 'Ralph Balson and Gallery A', *Gallery A Sydney 1964 – 1983*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, New South Wales, 2009, p.106

LUCIE REEVES-SMITH


R. Balson. 58

FRED WILLIAMS

2

(1927 – 1982)
UPWEY LANDSCAPE, c.1965
gouache on paper on composition board
55.5 x 73.0 cm
signed lower left: Fred Williams.
artist's label attached verso with number, artist's name, title, medium and dimensions

ESTIMATE: $45,000 – 65,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney
The National Australia Bank Art Collection,
acquired in 1970 (label attached verso)

RELATED WORK

Upwey Landscape, 1965, oil on canvas, 147.5 x 183.3 cm, in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

We are grateful to Lyn Williams for her assistance with this catalogue entry.

One of the most important Australian artists of the twentieth century, Fred Williams transformed the tradition of landscape painting in this country. His unique vision of the natural environment – from areas of scrubby bush on the edges of suburbia, to the vast inland country – captured its essence and created archetypal images that have become part of our collective visual memory. Produced during the mid-1960s at a time when Williams, confident and mature, emerged as a key figure in contemporary Australian art, the Upwey Series sits alongside the preceding You Yangs works as 'classic' Williams. Articulating their significance both within Williams' oeuvre and the broader context of Australian landscape painting, Patrick McCaughey wrote, 'They were clearly paintings of substance, well made and fully fashioned and yet they still allowed [his] touch to operate. They made of the drab and featureless bush, a landscape of enduring, even monumental proportions and dignity. They revalued Australian landscape painting… and renewed hope in the genre.'[1]

While Williams had previously painted in and around Upwey, in the Dandenong Ranges to the east of Melbourne, it was the experience of living there from 1963 which provided the impetus for a major series. Now able to paint full-time, he established a studio in the house by joining two rooms together, and the view looking from the valley up the hill to the sky above informed the composition of these images, which are characterised by a narrow band of sky running across the top of a steep, treed slope.[2] The strength of the series was recognised early, with the National Gallery of Victoria acquiring *Upwey Landscape III*, 1965 from the studio the year it was painted. Major Upwey paintings are also held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, Art Gallery of New South Wales and Tate, London.

Williams worked in various media throughout his career – the technical possibilities and creative innovations of one, influencing his work in another – and Upwey subjects feature in drawings, etchings, gouaches, as well as oil paintings. A quick-drying medium composed of watercolour mixed with white pigment (which renders it opaque), gouache was his preferred medium for painting outdoors during the mid-sixties. As this example shows however, in addition to its convenience and ease of use, in Williams' hands, gouache also offered something of the richness of oil paint in terms of the pictorial possibilities and textural manipulation it allowed. The familiar format of the Upwey landscapes is combined here with a luscious wintry palette, a hillside of deep browns, ochre and grey, beneath a pale sky streaked with painterly clouds. Williams' trademark daubs and dots of paint describe dense vegetation growing across the top of the hill and tree trunks, strongly defined in black, mark out the topography of the hillside, the verticals of standing trees creating a staccato-like rhythm across the picture which is counterbalanced by the series of horizontal lines at centre left depicting a group of recently felled trees.

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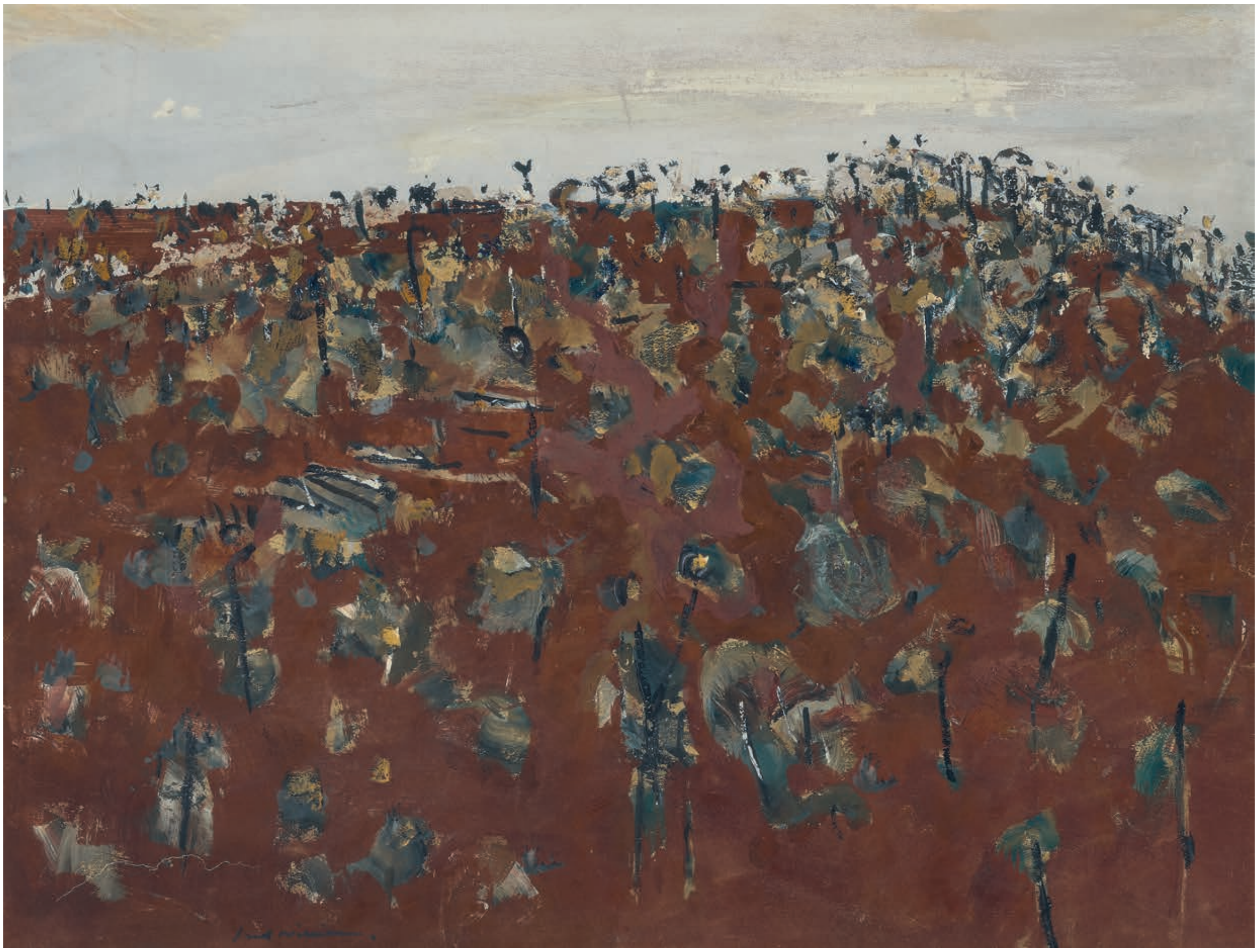
1. McCaughey, P., *Fred Williams 1927 – 1982*, Murdoch Books, Sydney, 1996, p. 170
2. See Mollison, J., *A Singular Vision: The Art of Fred Williams*, Australian National Gallery & Oxford University Press, Canberra, 1989, p. 89
3. In the late 1960s Williams began to make small outdoor oil sketches, adding acrylic paint to his repertoire of outdoor materials in 1971.

KIRSTY GRANT



ERIC THAKE

3

(1904 – 1982)
THE WEEKLY TRAIN DEPARTS,
THE DOG GOES BACK TO SLEEP, 1971
oil on canvas
61.5 x 36.0 cm
signed and dated lower left: ERIC THAKE 1971
inscribed with title on backing board verso:
“The weekly train departs, the dog goes back to sleep” /
Grand Hotel / Kookynie. W. A

ESTIMATE: $25,000 – 35,000

PROVENANCE

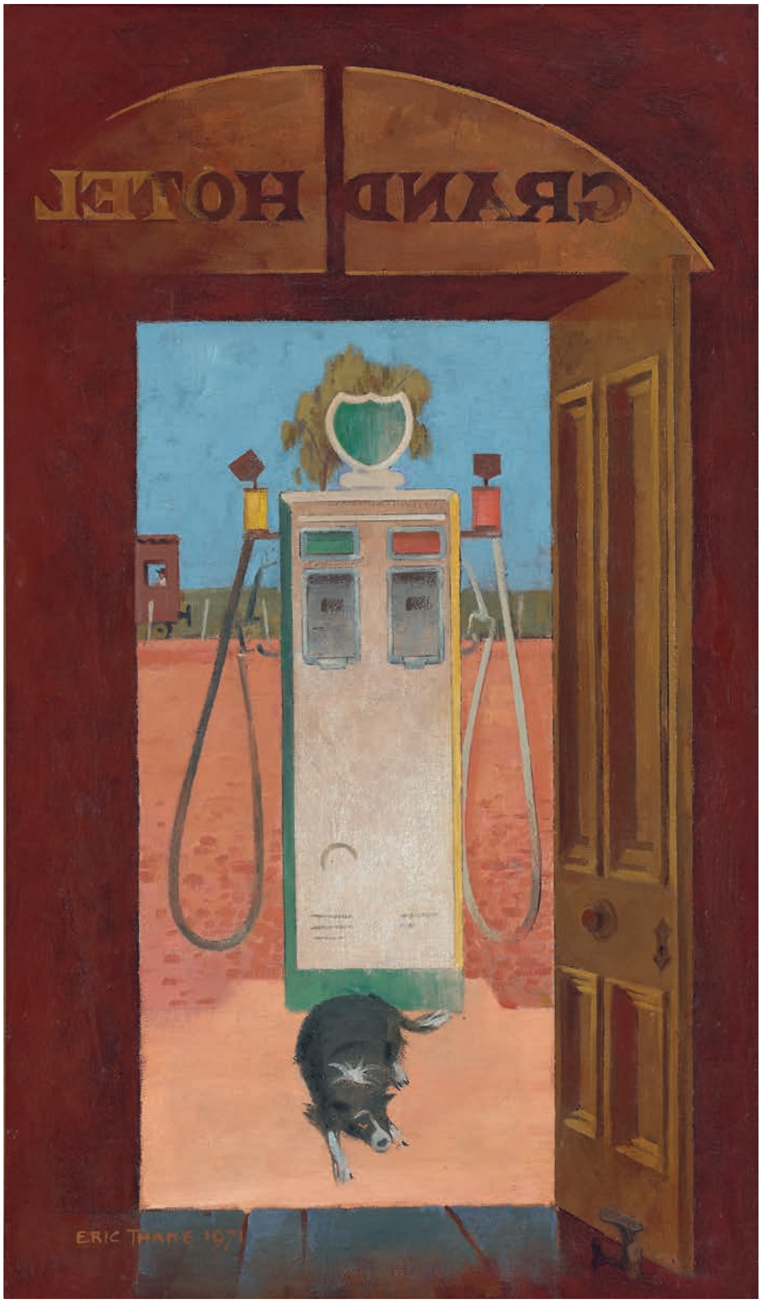
The artist
Thence by descent
Mrs Joan Mann and Mrs Jenifer Beaty, the artist’s daughters (inscribed verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Eric Thake, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 15 October – 28 November 1976, cat. 19 (illus. in exhibition catalogue)
Eric Thake, Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 2 – 14 February 1977, cat. 7
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 35
‘The Seventies’ Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection ‘Modern Art of the Seventies’, Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 22
Paint on the Tracks: Australian Artists and the Railway, S. H. Ervin Gallery, The National Trust of Australia, Sydney, 22 April – 29 May 1994, cat. 50 (illus. in exhibition catalogue, p. 11)
Best in Show – Dogs in Australian Art, Orange Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 9 April – 3 July 2016

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 91, p. 104 (illus.)
Best Loved Poems and Stories of the Australian People, Weldon Publishing, Sydney, 1988 (illus. np)
Fry, G., ‘Paint on the tracks: Australian Arts and the Railway’, *Look*, Sydney, 1994, p. 20
Miller, S., *Dogs in Australian Art*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 2012, pp. 56, 57 (illus.), 213


GRAND HOTEL
ERIC THAKE 1971

Inside the Grand Hotel Kookynie, Goldfields, Western Australia
photographer unknown

Eric Thake holds a unique place in the account of Australian Surrealism. It is a movement where visualisations of nightmares and apocalyptic trauma are common. Thake was never drawn to corporeal distortion and bloodlust, rather his inimitable observation and inventive imagination become his mainstay.

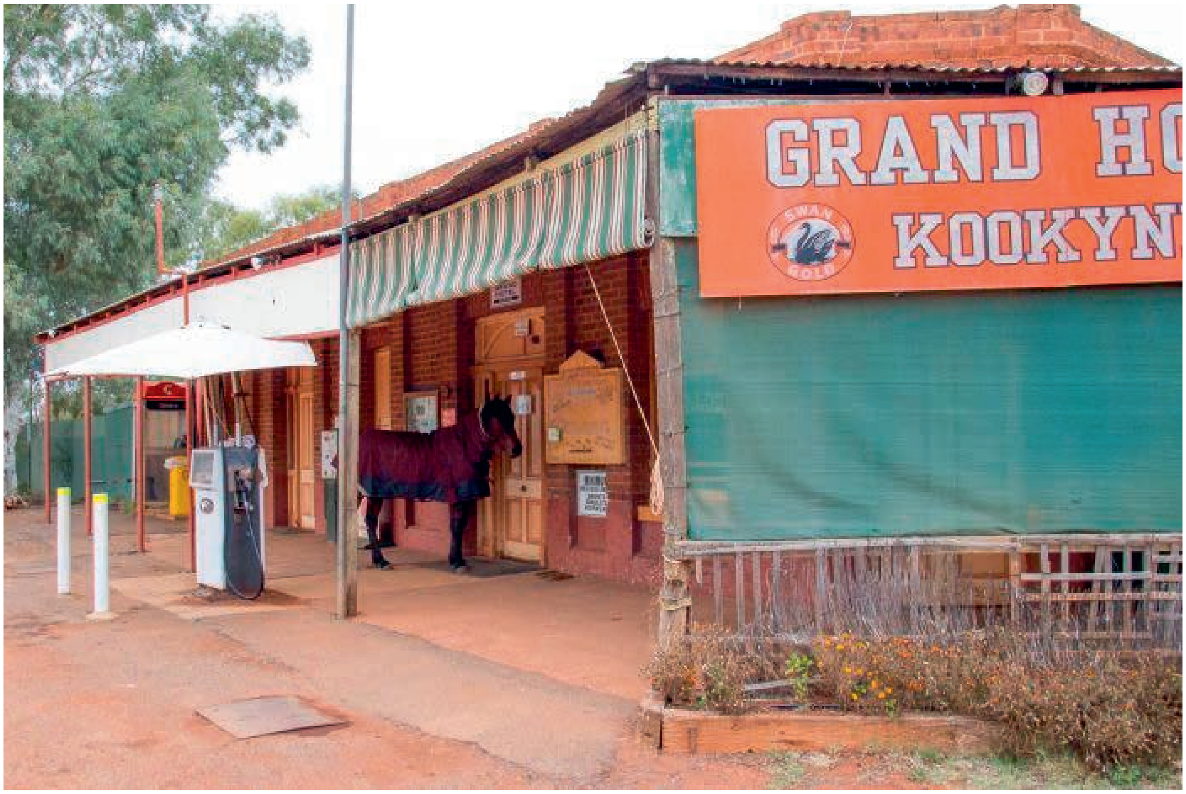
He was possibly Australia's most unusual war artist – seemingly avoiding his brief and getting away with it. Bombings, soldiers fighting, wounded, the bloodied and bandaged were never his subjects. Thake preferred to anthropomorphise the debris of war giving objects such as *Liberator's Face*, 1945, the nose of a dismembered aircraft, an unexpected iconographic form. This offers a central clue to his future paintings.[1]

Following evening classes at the National Gallery Drawing School, Melbourne under Bernard Hall and W B McInnes, he joined George Bell's classes part-time from 1925. He was taken by Bell's interest in modernism and his encouragement of abstract principles, strong design and experimentation in composition. In the 1930s, he became aware of the English surrealists, especially Paul Nash, and Giorgio de Chirico's metaphysical paintings. The culmination of these interests and the synthesising of their approaches was the work *Salvation from the evils of earthly existence*, 1940. It entered the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria a year after it was painted.[2]

Thake always took a sketchbook and camera with him. These not only served as a visual aide-mémoire but also, subjects such as *Bushranger* 1957 – a photograph of a wrapped petrol station pump – becomes a work in its own right.[3] Thake's linocuts are greatly admired for their wit and colloquial satire drawn from unexpected encounters.

In *The weekly train departs, the dog goes back to sleep,* we see Thake's quirky temperament brilliantly underplayed. In 1971 when he visited the West Australian Goldfields its heady days had long gone. Kookynie is a two-hour drive north east of Kalgoorlie and from a population of 3,500 its peak at the end of the nineteenth century its most recent count is fewer than 30 people.

'It was not until 1970 that I realised a long looked-forward visit to the old goldfields … most of them now but a name on a map, but I found a great deal of inspiration … for instance the filter on the right shoulder of



Grand Hotel Kookynie, Goldfields, Western Australia
photographer unknown

the pump at the Grand Hotel attracted my attention to the possibility of a painting – if it had not been into [sic] this shy-coy position I'm sure I would never have given it the attention it deserved… the dog was drawn a week or so later at Meekatharra some 350 miles to the N.W. The pump I photographed and arranged the composition after my return home'.[4]

Thake always takes us further than first impressions. There is an hot eerie stillness in *The weekly train departs…* It is not simply an evocative moment of nostalgia: a (then) modern petrol stand is front and centre. It alludes to some kind of unexplained certainty despite the haunting absence of people. The viewpoint of the artist in a standoff with his subject is all we are given. And the dog couldn't care less. Or as Steven Miller as describes it, 'the petrol pump… appears to have metamorphosed into a woman: in 1971, women were not permitted in the public bars of Australian hotels, but this one is clearly unstoppable.[5]

1. *Liberator's face,* August 1945, gouache on paper, collection of the Australian War Memorial, Canberra
2. *Salvation from the evils of earthly existence,* 1940, oil on card, collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
3. *Bushranger,* 1957, silver gelatin photograph, collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
4. Artist's quote, Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of the National Bank of Australia,* National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 104
5. Miller, S., *Dogs in Australian Art,* Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 2012, p. 56

DOUG HALL AM

JOHN BRACK

4

(1920 – 1999)
THROUGH THE WINDOW, 1972
oil on canvas
82.5 x 116.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: John Brack 72
inscribed with title on handwritten label attached to stretcher bar
verso: 'THROUGH THE / WINDOW'

ESTIMATE: $400,000 – 600,000

PROVENANCE

Joseph Brown Gallery, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1978 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

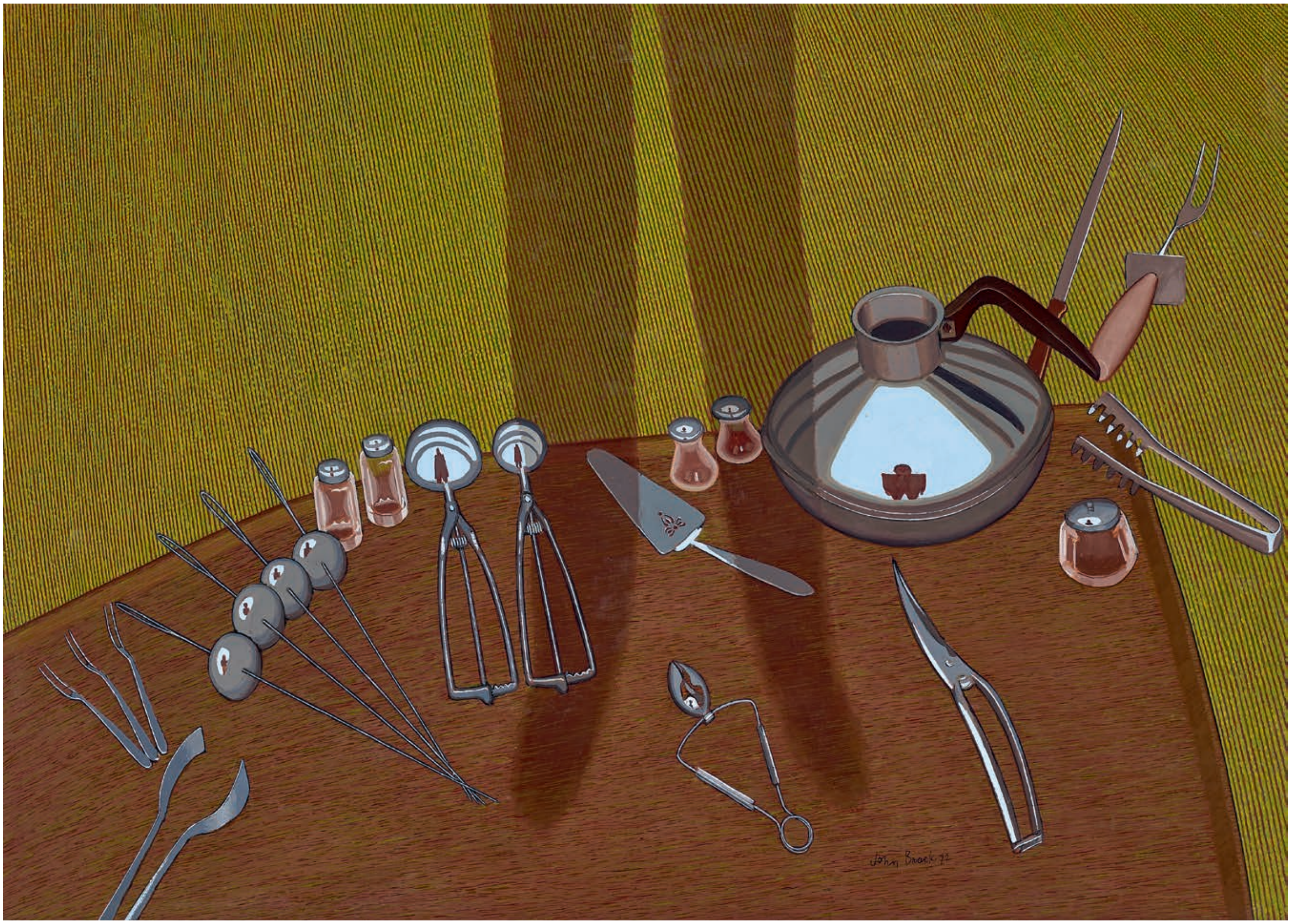
Spring Exhibition 1972, Joseph Brown Gallery, Melbourne, 8 – 24 November 1972, cat. 56 (illus. in exhibition catalogue)
John Brack, Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, 10 – 28 November 1973, cat. 15
John Brack: selected paintings and drawings 1947–1977, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology Gallery, Melbourne, 15 March – 1 April 1977, cat. 30
John Brack: paintings and drawings 1945 – 1977, Australian National University, Canberra, 21 September – 6 October 1977, cat. 36
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
John Brack: A Retrospective Exhibition, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 10 December 1987 – 31 January 1988, cat. 85
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 4
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 2
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 4; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990
Arrangement Australian Still Life 1973 – 1993, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 15 November 1993 – 25 January 1994
John Brack – Selected Paintings 1950s – 1990s, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 15 June – 14 July 1996, cat. 10

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 15, p. 28 (illus.)
Lindsay, R., *John Brack: A Retrospective Exhibition*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1987, pl. 85, p. 65 (illus.)
Grishin, S., *The Art of John Brack*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990, vol. I, p. 124; vol. II, cat. o202, pp. 28, 147 (illus.)
Fenner, F., 'The Good Life: Paintings lost in the 70s', *Tamworth Daily Leader*, New South Wales, 1 June 1990

RELATED WORK

Inside and Outside (The Shop Window), 1972, oil on canvas, 164.0 x 130.5 cm, in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra


John Brack 72

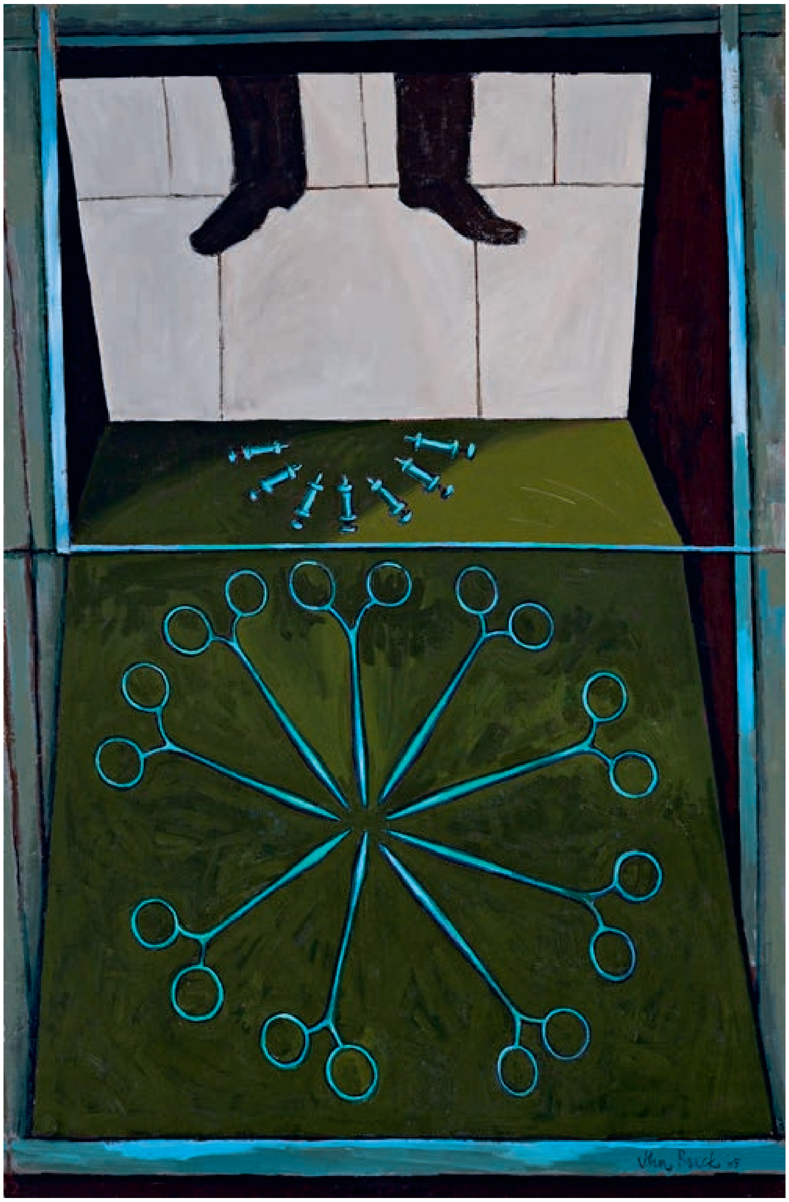
‘What I paint most is what interests me most, that is, people; the Human Condition… A large part of the motive… is the desire to understand, and if possible, to illuminate… My material is what lies nearest to hand, the people and the things I know best.’[1]

As a painter of modern life, John Brack found subjects in his immediate surroundings, the suburbs and the city of Melbourne. His best-known paintings of 1950s Australia, such as *The New House*, 1953 (Art Gallery of New South Wales) and the iconic *Collins St*, *5pm*, 1955 (National Gallery of Victoria), are full of acute observations of contemporary living, seemingly humorous and ironic – and from an early twenty-first century perspective, definitely also nostalgic. Such images were primarily motivated however, by Brack’s intense interest in people and the human condition. His early resolution to produce an essentially humanist art that engaged directly with the present was supported by his reading of writers including Rainer Maria Rilke, who advised to ‘seek those [themes] which your own everyday life offers you’ and Henry James, who found inspiration for his stories in random events and snippets of overheard conversations.[2] As Brack explained, ‘I believed… that you had to decide whether you were going to… take no notice of events or whether you were going to be engaged. Temperamentally, it was obvious I had to be the latter.’[3]

While Brack strove to create art which engaged with universal themes, his method of identifying subject matter that was close at hand inevitably resulted in images with a distinctly local flavour – recognisable to anyone who grew up in mid-twentieth century Australia, and especially in Melbourne – and unavoidable elements of autobiography appear throughout his oeuvre. The artist’s family inevitably features, his wife Helen was the model for *The Sewing Machine*, 1955 (Art Gallery of Ballarat), for example, and their daughters provided both the visual and thematic inspiration for paintings like *The Chase*, 1959 (private collection). *The Bar*, 1954 (National Gallery of Victoria) – an homage of sorts, which transposes the Parisian setting of Edouard Manet’s famous painting, *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, 1882, to austere 1950s Melbourne – was based on Brack’s experience of the six o’clock swill in city pubs on his way home from work.

A number of Brack’s images relate to shops and shop window displays and indeed, the experience of seeing reproductions of paintings by Van Gogh in a Little Collins Street shopfront in the late 1930s was a motivating factor in his decision to pursue a career as a professional artist. He later recalled that this vision had a powerful, physical effect, it was ‘a sort of shuddering… overwhelmingly, totally unexpected moment’.[4] The first painting based on a shop window was made in 1955 and depicts a display of commercial kitchen equipment he had seen at the top of Bourke Street in Melbourne. Simply titled, *The Slicing Machine Shop*, 1955 (private collection), depicts gleaming meat slicers, measuring scales and giant mixers which assume threatening, anthropomorphic qualities belying their obviously inanimate status. For Brack, intent on expressing something beyond the superficial, this display offered a powerful metaphor that spoke to recent world events. Helen Brack has written about this and related paintings, noting that, ‘In the early 1950s the reality of the Holocaust was felt here in Melbourne… and John felt compelled to comment because it had happened in our time… *The Block*, 1954, is the first of these visual essays, followed by *The Lift*, 1954, then the two slicing machine pictures… and perhaps the final one is *The Bird Lady*, 1958… at the time, no art commentator saw them as other than local depiction… They applauded the humour where John saw none’.[5]

Brack’s most concentrated series of shop window subjects was painted in the early 1960s, and this time, the windows featured in paintings such as *Still Life with Artificial Leg*, 1963 (private collection) and *The Happy Boy*, 1964 (National Gallery of Australia) – the latter based on Roper’s medical supply shop in Swanston Street, Melbourne – displayed



John Brack
The Rosette, 1965
oil on canvas
81.5 x 53.5 cm
private collection
© Helen Brack

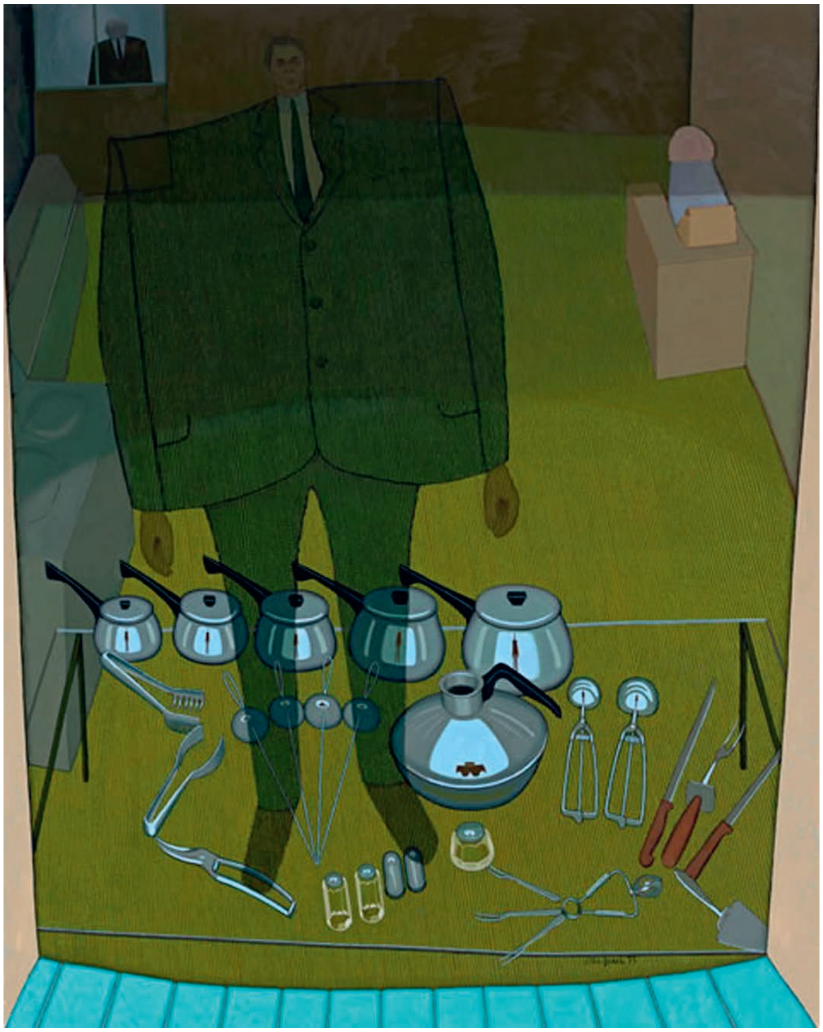
surgical instruments, prosthetic limbs and other medical aids. With their obvious associations with the human body, these objects enabled Brack to comment about life without depicting the figure, instead using subject matter that seemed to him, more appropriate for a contemporary artist. He often found subjects walking the city streets and recorded the details of what he saw in quick sketches which were later used as aides memoire in the studio. Additional detail was sometimes provided by photographs taken by his friend Laurence Course, an art historian and keen photographer. Brack often used his own reflection looking through the window, and the recognition that there were people inside the shop looking out, to add visual ambiguity and narrative complexity to these paintings. Summing this up, he said, 'The exterior and the interior of the window become mixed up, they become a paradox… illustrative not simply of shop windows but of the whole aspect of life itself, so that people who pass by are entangled with the beautiful display, gleaming instruments and they mean not only a paradox but also have something to do with the props that hold people together.'[6]

Brack returned to this theme again in 1972, producing two closely related paintings, *Through the Window* and *Inside and Outside (The Shop Window)* (National Gallery of Australia). On this occasion, the shop in question sold domestic kitchen utensils and he revels in the depiction of their artful display, carefully describing, among other items, an array of tongs, ice cream scoops, cake servers and salt and pepper shakers. Sasha Grishin notes that when painting these works, for the first time, Brack exclusively used sable brushes and oil paint mixed with Wingel, (a Winsor & Newton product) which contributed to a new level of detail and sense of transparency.[7] A large shadow, recognisable as the artist, looms over *Inside and Outside (The Shop Window)*, allowing us to identify the legs in *Through the Window* as also belonging to Brack. His presence is magnified through the multiple, meticulously painted reflections of his figure which are visible in the shiny surfaces of the utensils, most clearly the coffee pot, which also reflects the blue of the sky outside. Comparison of both paintings also clarifies the position of the tongs and carving implements on the right-hand side of *Through the Window*, which appear, oddly, to float in space. While at first glance, the brown shape looks like the surface on which the utensils are displayed, the National Gallery of Australia painting clarifies Brack's visual riddle, revealing it as a mat on the floor which is visible through a glass display table that has otherwise been totally cropped out of this view.

Through the Window is classic Brack, exemplifying not only his great technical skill, but the distinctive intellectual ingenuity he brought to his art, and through which he created such a unique and significant place in the history of twentieth century Australian art. As Patrick McCaughey wrote, 'His appeal is to the intelligence: to read what has been so clearly described. Yet behind the impersonal, unbroken surface lies a world which seethes with irony, ambiguity, where the normal is displaced or held in a different balance. The lucidity of Brack's art, his subjects and his mode alike, do not disguise the complexity of his imagination.'[8]

1. Brack quoted in Reed, J., *New Painting 1952-62,* Longman, Melbourne, 1963, p. 19
2. See Grant, K., 'Human Nature: The Art of John Brack' in Grant, K., *John Brack*, exhibition catalogue, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2009, p. 92
3. Brack, J., 'Brack on Brack', Council of Adult Education, Discussion Group Art Notes, Melbourne, ref. no. A401, 1957, p. 1
4. Brack quoted in Grishin, S., *The Art of John Brack*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1990, p. 7
5. Brack, H., 'This Oeuvre – The Work Itself' in Grant, op. cit., p. 12
6. Brack in *The Lively Arts: John Brack*, ABC-TV documentary, Tony Morphett (director), Melbourne, 1965
7. Grishin, op. cit., p. 124
8. McCaughey, P., 'The Complexity of John Brack' in Lindsay, R., *John Brack*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1987, p. 8

KIRSTY GRANT



John Brack
Inside and Outside
(The Shop Window), 1972
oil on canvas
164.0 x 130.5 cm
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
© Helen Brack

EDWIN TANNER

5

(1920 – 1980)
A HORSE, A HORSE, MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE (RICHARD III), 1977
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
168.0 x 183.0 cm
signed and dated upper left: EDWIN TANNER, 1977
signed and dated lower right: EDWIN TANNER 1977

ESTIMATE: $60,000 – 80,000

PROVENANCE

Realities Gallery, Melbourne (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
National Australia Bank, acquired from the above in July 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

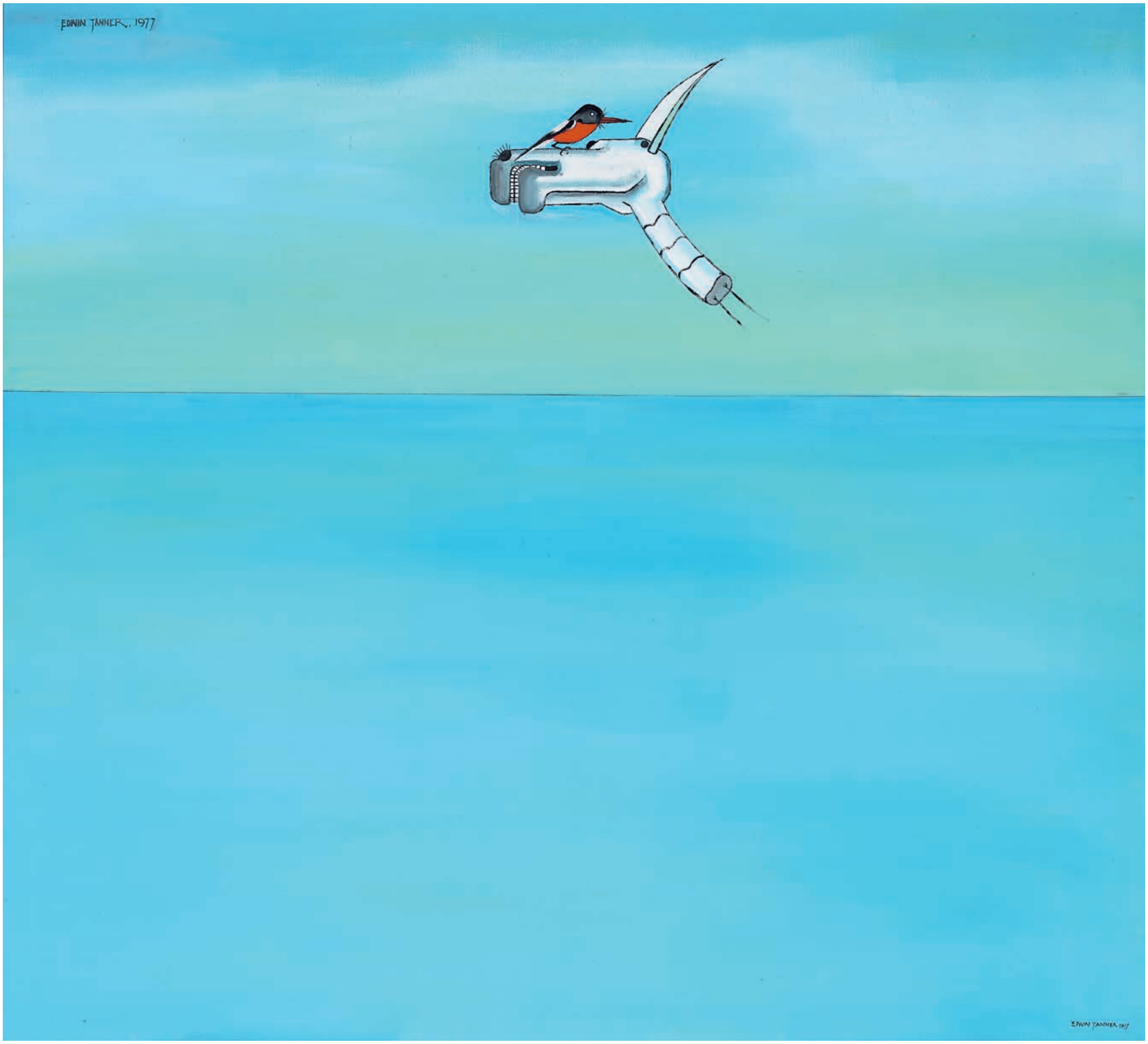
Edwin Tanner, Realities Gallery, Melbourne, 30 May – 21 June 1979, cat. 16
Edwin Tanner, Murray Crescent Galleries, Canberra, 1980, cat. 26
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 33
Edwin Tanner Works 1952 – 1980, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, 15 March – 12 May 1990, cat. 83
Penetralia: Art & Psychoanalysis in Melbourne, 1940 – 2004, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Melbourne, 30 June 2004 – 7 August 2004
Edwin Tanner: Mathematical Expressionist, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria, 12 May – 15 July 2018

LITERATURE

Eagle, M., ‘Archibald prize got an artist to his peak’, *The Age*, 7 June 1979, p. 2
McCaughey, P., ‘Flying, cycling engineer who loves to paint’, *The Age,* 9 June 1979, p. 23
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 89, p. 102 (illus.)
Duncan, J., *Edwin Tanner Works 1952–1980*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, 1990, p. 28 (illus.)
Edgar, R., ‘’Visionary’ artist who enraged public servants celebrated at TarraWarra’, *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 4 May 2018
Fitzpatrick, A., *Edwin Tanner: mathematical expressionist*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria, 2018, pp. 25, 26, 107 (illus.), 134

RELATED WORKS

Ozymandias, 1960, oil on composition board, 84.0 x 91.0 cm, private collection
Drawing for A Horse, A Horse, My Kingdom for a Horse (Richard III), 1965, pencil on paper, 39.0 x 29.0 cm, in the collection of Robin Greer


EDWIN TANNER. 1977
EDWIN TANNER 1977

In 1967, at the age of 46, Edwin Tanner was affected by a stroke following the physical effects of a car accident suffered some years earlier, and this decline in physical health endowed his already gnomic art with existential malaise.[1] Subjects of isolation, exile and existential questioning were pervasive throughout his art of the 1970s, often conveyed through recurring motifs of a bird and horse. This was, for Tanner, a sudden and brief return to representation after years of dry abstraction. Revisiting compositions first conceived more than ten years earlier, *A Horse, A Horse, My Kingdom for A Horse (Richard III),* 1977 is a masterpiece of Tanner's late works, poignantly expressing the artist's lassitude and frustrations, as always illustrated with incisive wit and literary allusion. Open-ended and philosophical, Tanner's paintings stood apart from the mainstream currents of modern art in Australia, and despite the best efforts of critic Patrick McCaughey, is only now receiving the wider commercial and institutional appreciation he so deserved during his lifetime.

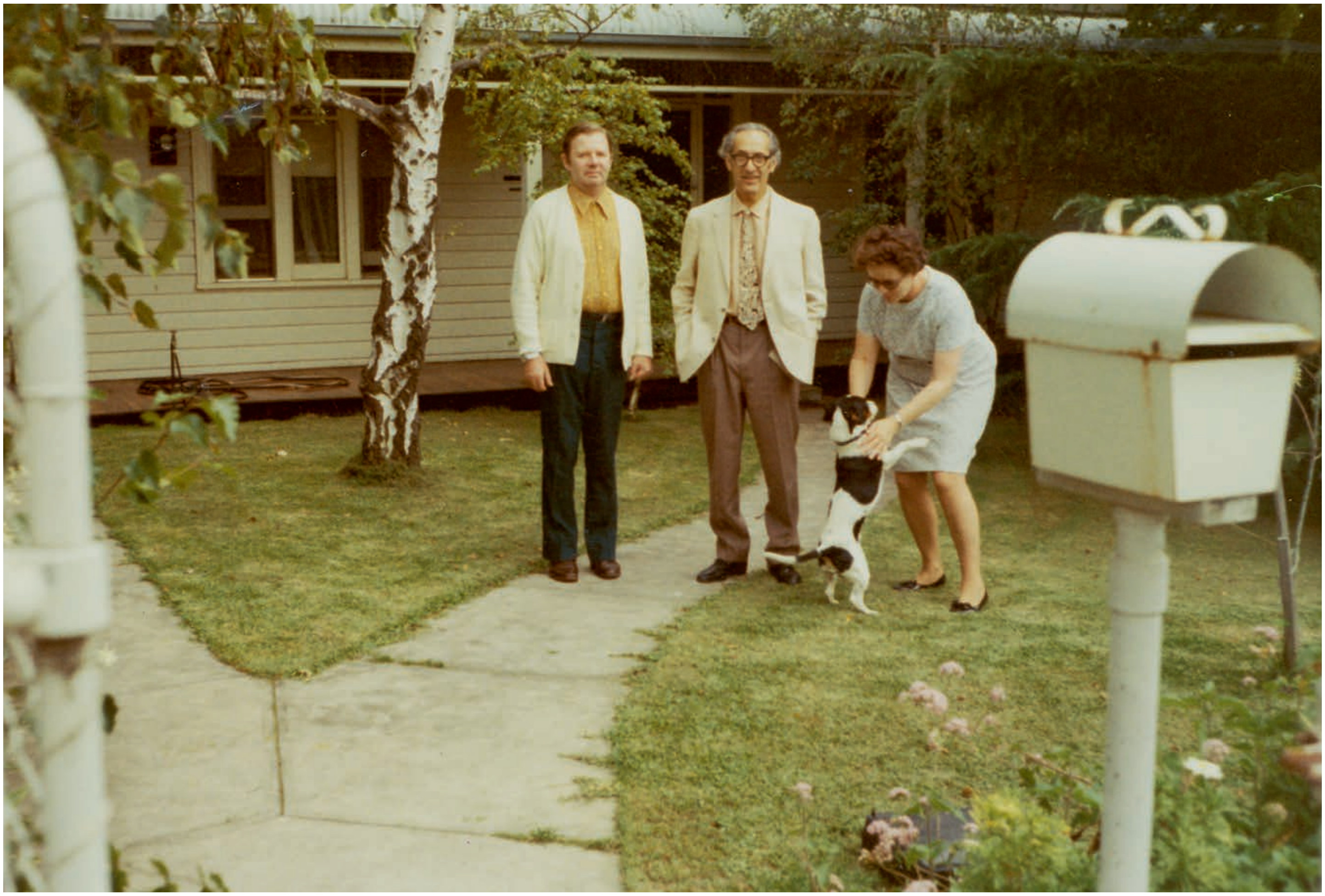
Floating in the sky above a limitless blue ocean is a disembodied horse's head (mechanical? or concrete?) upon which sits a scarlet robin. Tanner reprises in this painting an image that first originated from a horse's carcass he encountered on a trip to Thirroul to visit his parents in 1952. The startling encounter became a drawing – *Dead Cert,* 1952 (private collection), and in 1960, *Ozymandias*, a painting featuring the horse's head, although now decapitated and crowned with a bird. The carrion bird is angular and menacing, appearing to be crowing atop the horses remains, which lie on the ground far from its body, just visible in the distance. Both *Ozymandias* and *A Horse, A Horse…* bear titles with clear literary references, with both written works addressing the vanity and absurdity of human wishes: the former refers to a sonnet by Percy Shelley and latter, the most famous quote from Shakespeare's drama, *Richard III*. As the poetic last words of the king before he dies on the battlefield, have come to signify an expression of extreme frustration and helplessness in the face of defeat, with dire circumstances elevating a once mundane possession (a horse) to a prized tool capable of saving his life. As Ray Edgar suggested in a newspaper review in 2018: 'for Tanner, the horse is less a traditional object of artistic veneration than a symbol of brutal truth… symbolic of empires lost (perhaps even the futility of art), it has gravitas yet simultaneously floats freely in an abstract field of blue'.[2] Interestingly, the 1965 pencil sketch for *A Horse, A Horse* is inscribed with a line from Shelley's *Ozymandias*: 'the lone and level sands stretched far away' and the words 'pre-stressed concrete', indicating the industrially engineered basis of Tanner's horse figure.

A Horse, A Horse, My Kingdom for a Horse, was exhibited in Edwin Tanner's last exhibition before his premature death in 1980; a retrospective exhibition of works from the previous two decades, held in Melbourne's Realities Galleries. While Mary Eagle wrote dismissively of this painting, Patrick McCaughey immediately countered two days later in the same publication admiring the 'handsome selection' of artworks and noting in the paintings a 'plangent theme… of the human as victim of his environment – tangled and snared in technology or lost in the deep blue spaces of air'.[3] While his earlier paintings were decidedly humorous, even satirical, Tanner's eccentricities are felt in the paintings of the 70s as isolating factors, keenly felt and thinly veiled amongst the abstraction of straight lines and flat expanses of paint.

A remarkable polymath with Welsh artistic sensibilities, Tanner couldn't help but transform the painting plane into a design blueprint whose secrets were clear only to him, describing his works as 'a wholly new start, a new raid on the subconscious'.[4] Although at times his tongue-in-cheek social commentary inflamed public opinion, during his lifetime he remained largely neglected by the press and the art establishment, his works prized among artists and a small group of connoisseurs appreciative of the inventiveness of his unique artistic vision. Today his place has been rightfully re-established and solidified through further acquisitions by the National Gallery of Victoria; the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art; the Art Gallery of New South Wales; and most recently, a major retrospective exhibition held at TarraWarra Museum of Art, in which this painting was prominently featured.

1. Fitzpatrick, A., *Edwin Tanner: mathematical expressionist*, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria, 2018, p. 129
2. Edgar, R., ''Visionary' artist who enraged public servants celebrated at Tarrawarra', *Sydney Morning Herald,* 4 May 2018
3. McCaughey, P., 'Flying, cycling engineer who loves to paint', *The Age,* 9 June 1979, p. 23
4. The artist, cited in Horton, M., *Australian Painters of the 70s*, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1975, p. 57

LUCIE REEVES-SMITH



Edwin Tanner, Prof Diesendorf and Mrs Shirley Tanner with dog Ethelred the Ready, 1974
photographer unknown
Fryer Library Pictorial Collection, University of Queensland Library, Brisbane

JEFFREY SMART

6

(1921 – 2013)
THE FOOTBRIDGE, 1975
oil on canvas
75.5 x 90.0 cm
signed lower right: JEFFREY SMART

ESTIMATE: $400,000 – 600,000

PROVENANCE

South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Jeffrey Smart, South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne, 15 August 1975, cat. 27
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 32
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 19

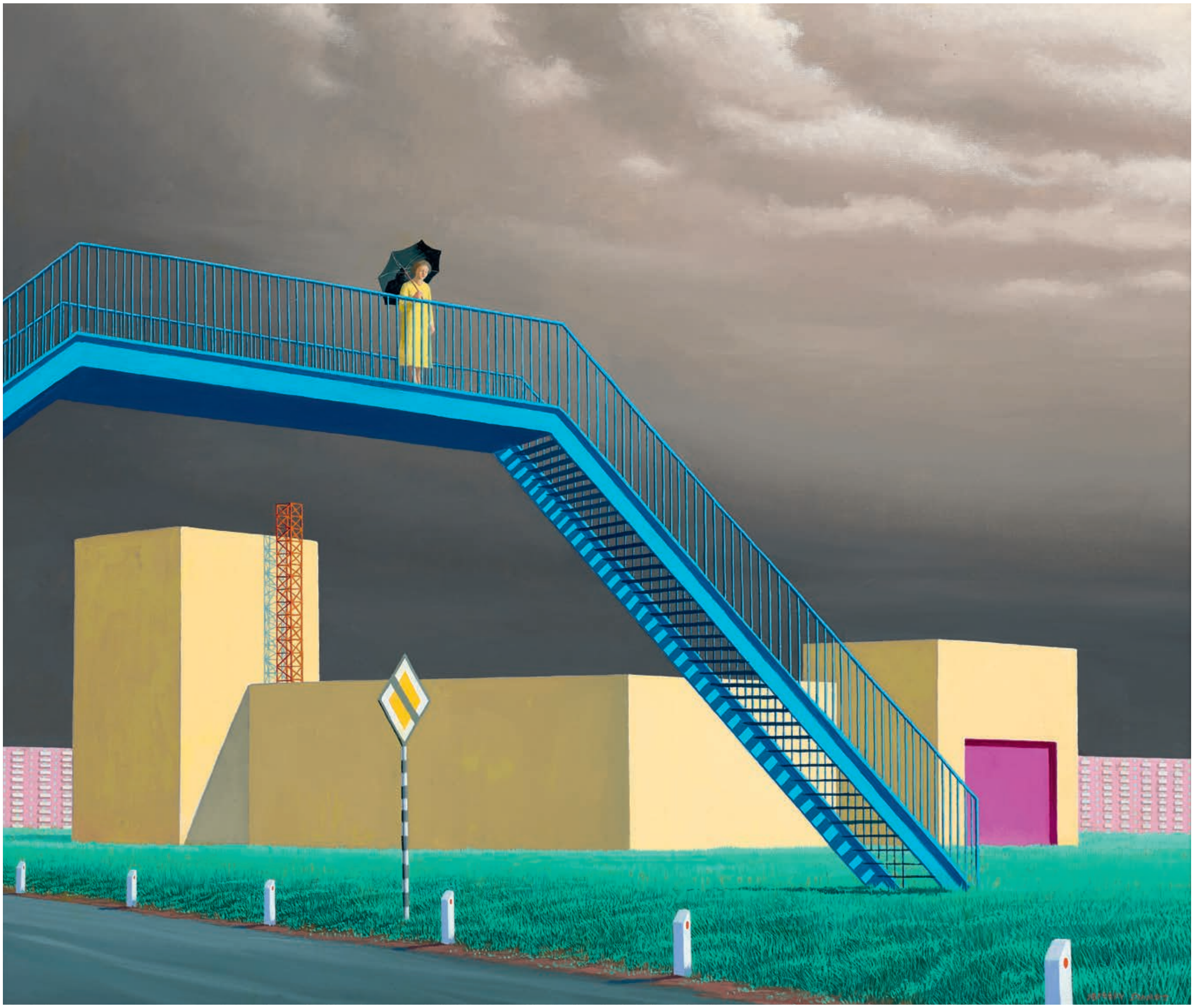
LITERATURE

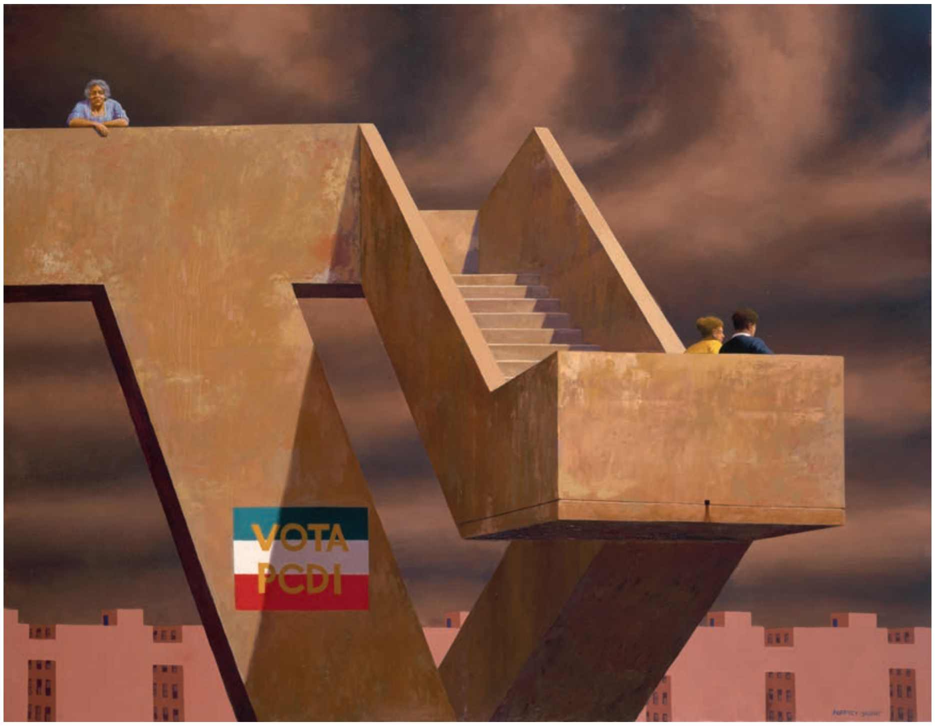
Hutchings, P., 'Jeffrey Smart: Realism in Three Dimensions', *New Lugano Review*, Switzerland, no. 8 – 9, 1976, pp. 60 (illus.), 115
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 83, p. 96 (illus.)
Quartermaine, P., *Jeffrey Smart*, Gryphon Books, Melbourne, 1983, cat. 644, p. 113
'First Public Display in Sydney of National's Paintings' *The University of Sydney News*, Sydney, vol. 21, no. 20, 1 August 1989, p. 170
McDonald, J., *Jeffrey Smart. Paintings of the 70s and 80s*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1990, cat. 98, p. 157
Williams, D., *In Our Own Image. The Story of Australian Art 1788 – 1989*, McGraw Hill Book Co., New South Wales, 2nd edition, 1990, pp. 160, 161 (illus., as 'Footbridge')

RELATED WORK

Study for The Footbridge, 1974 – 75, oil on canvas, 33.0 x 45.0 cm, private collection

We are grateful to Stephen Rogers, Archivist for the Estate of Jeffrey Smart, for his assistance with this catalogue entry.



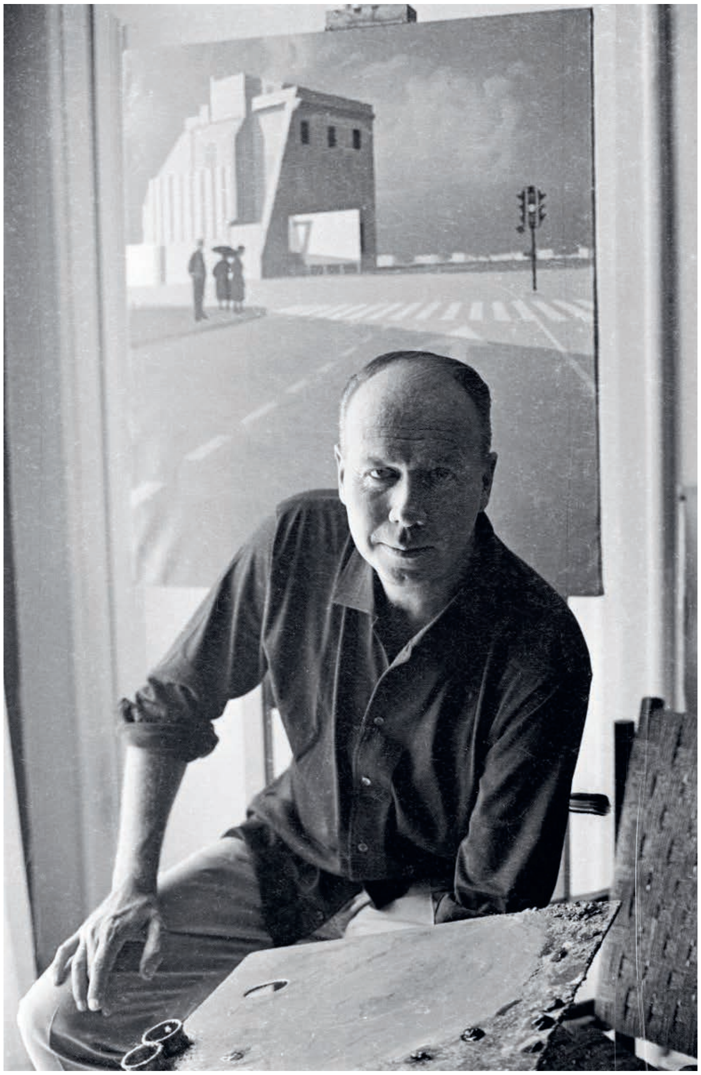


Jeffrey Smart
Over the Flaminia, 1986
oil on canvas
85.5 x 109.5 cm
Private collection
© The Estate of Jeffrey Smart

> 'I find myself moved by man in this new violent environment. I want to paint this explicitly and beautifully…'[1]

One of the great ironies of Jeffrey Smart's immeasurable artistic legacy is that his works should evoke the classical stillness, geometry and light of Italian Renaissance painting, only to reveal simultaneously how that humanist adventure which began five centuries ago has led to an anonymous and inhuman contemporary environment.[2] Invariably featuring isolated figures in modern 'Orwellian' cities, dwarfed by their own monumental creations, his compositions have perhaps not surprisingly invited comparison with both the haunted empty Italian *piazze* of *pittura metafisica* exponent, Giorgio de Chirico (1888 – 1978), and the lonely vistas of urban America depicted by Edward Hopper (1882 – 1967) whose art betrayed the melancholy belief that human beings and their values were being swallowed up by the rapacious advance of industrialisation. Yet to infer that Smart is somehow censorious or despairing of this urban landscape is misguided, notwithstanding the brooding unquiet skies, impersonal architecture and solitary figures that are the hallmarks of his art – as magnificently encapsulated here in *The Footbridge*, 1975. Rather his response is one of inexplicable supplication or gratitude for an often modest, slightly odd visual phenomenon in the contemporary world that has inspired him to spend time in the gloriously difficult process of constructing a painting.[3] As Smart reflects, 'When I am painting a beautiful object that has haunted me, I feel I'm doing no more than paying homage to it, *in very much the same way as you Christians praise your Lord*.'[4] Redolent with his love of ambiguity and seductive in their 'super-realism', Smart's compositions thus 'elevate mundane familiarities… to the status of semi-mystic icons'[5] – encouraging his audience to see the 'everyday' with fresh eyes, to discern beauty in the most unprepossessing, unromantic of subjects.

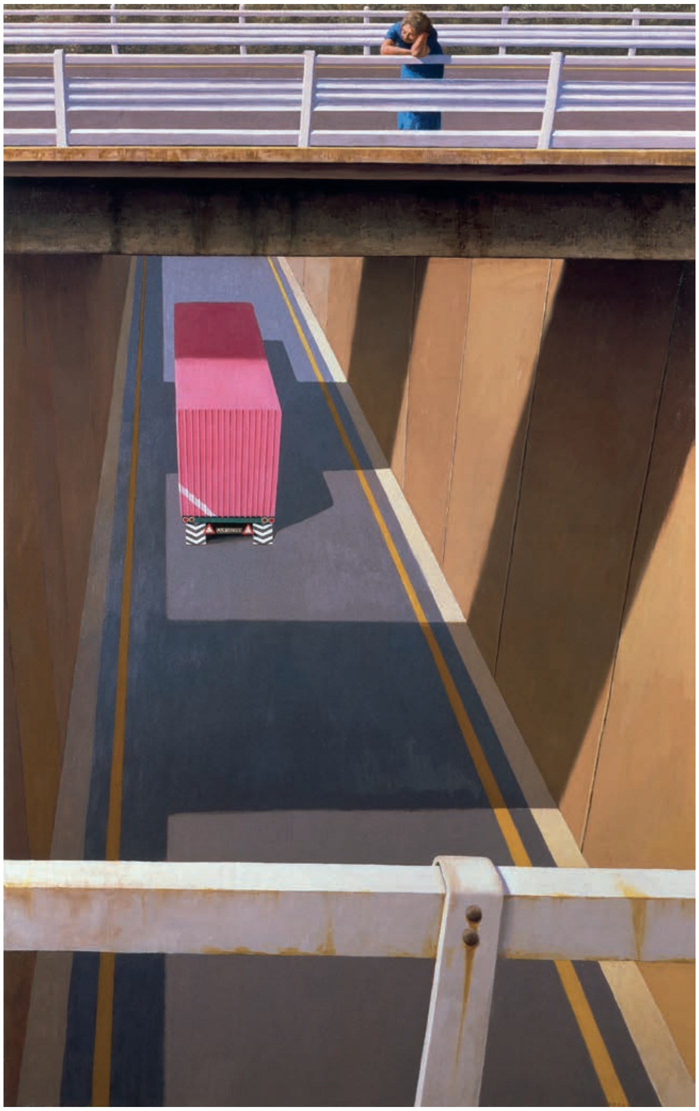
For Smart, the 1970s were a particularly formative decade – he had finally achieved financial security; his art was beginning to attract the widespread critical and commercial success it so deserved; and he had found lasting contentment in his personal life. Having acquired 'Posticcia Nuova' in 1971 – a rustic farmhouse, situated in the delightfully idyllic surrounds of the picturesque Tuscan countryside that was to be his home for the rest of his life – Smart's paintings from these early halcyon years were universally applauded among his most compelling and ambitious to date. Such is eloquently attested by the number that swiftly entered public institutions upon their exhibition at South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne (1972) and Rudy Komon Gallery in



Jeffrey Smart in Italy, 1967
photographer: Robert Walker
Art Gallery of New South Wales
Archive,Sydney

Sydney (1973), including the celebrated *Factory and Staff, Erehwyna*, 1972 (National Gallery of Victoria); *Truck and Trailer Approaching a City*, 1973 and *Bus Terminus*, 1973 (both Art Gallery of New South Wales) and *The Traveller*, 1973 (Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art). By 1975, when Smart embarked upon *The Footbridge*, he had met his lifelong partner Ermes De Zan, who moved in with him in June the same year, and would offer a source of unwavering support and inspiration over the following four decades; as Smart reminisced, '…it was the beginning… of the happiest time of my life.'[6] Other major works completed around this time included *Central Station II*, 1974 – 75 (Art Gallery of New South Wales) and *Sunday Morning II*, 1975 (private collection), while the closing years of the decade witnessed the emergence of such iconic compositions as *The Guiding Spheres II (Homage to Cezanne)*, 1979 – 80 (private collection) and *Autobahn in The Black Forest II*, 1979 – 80 (private collection).

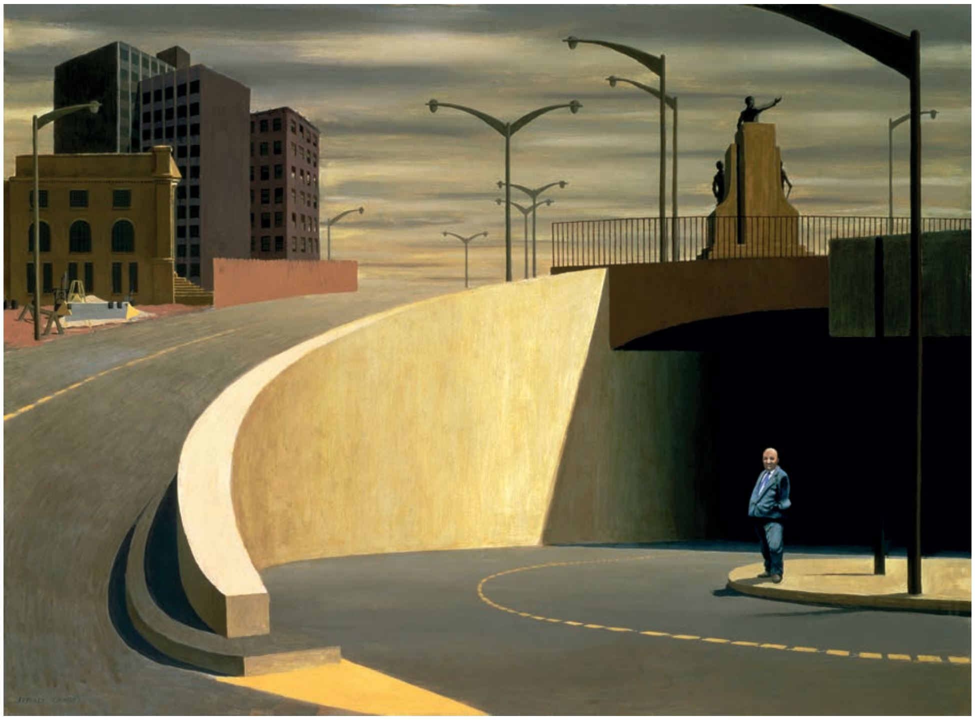
Frequently punctuating Smart's vast oeuvre, the compositional motif of one or more figures atop a footbridge or overpass appears arguably most famously in works such as *The Underpass*, 1986 – 87 (Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra) where the viewer is positioned on a footbridge over a highway watching both a truck pass below and the figure of a solitary woman leaning over the railing of a distant, parallel footbridge, and *Over The Flaminia*, 1986 (private collection) where we seem to be spying on a couple on the lower platform of the footbridge, while the figure of an old lady in the top left corner of the composition stares directly at us. Although unmistakably drawing its inspiration from the eponymous structure crossing the Botany freight line on the approach to the Sydney airport terminals which Smart would have glimpsed from the car many times on his travels, *The Footbridge* does not offer a faithful depiction *en plein air* of an exact scene. Rather, Smart here presents a composite image – carefully constructed from the complex weaving of motifs, symbols and disparate elements recalled from either real-life locations or gleaned from other artworks, both his own and those painted by artists whom he admired, to achieve the consummate composition, an immaculately-balanced symphony of form, colour and light.



Jeffrey Smart
The Underpass, 1986 – 87
oil on canvas
120.0 x 75.0 cm
Parliament House Art Collection, Canberra
© The Estate of Jeffrey Smart

Throughout his lifetime, Smart repeatedly and unequivocally declared his steadfast commitment to the abstract objectives of his art – 'My only concern is putting the right shapes in the right colours in the right places, My main concern is always the geometry, the structure of the painting'[7] – and indeed, in their deliberate orchestration, his paintings have often persuasively been compared to the Italian films of the 1950s and 60s by Fellini, Antonioni and Pasolini which typically feature composed shots distilled for poetic effect. Moreover, with the viewer here potentially cast as driver on the roadway below, *The Footbridge* also bears strong affinities with the 1970s road movies of Wim Wenders where the narrative unfolds through the windscreen of a car, with the audience invited to relate to the nomadic, unfulfilled characters who fleetingly experience happiness before being compelled to pack up and move on.[8] Like such films, the experience of Smart's paintings is both vicarious and voyeuristic, with the viewer implicated in scenes yet simultaneously removed from them. As Gary Catalano perceptively noted in his review of Smart's work, '…the question of whether Smart's figures are alienated or not is quite beside the point, for his main intention is to show that they, too, are watchers. Smart's intentions do not end there. With a consistency that cannot be ignored, he orientates these watchers in such a way that they are made to gaze at something that we can have no knowledge of. Smart's paintings are dramas which the viewer experiences as a sort of excluded witness.'[9]

Laden with a sense of intrigue and the suggestion of action existing and persisting just beyond the audience's line of sight, Smart's paintings thus tantalise the viewer towards a source of meaning – enticing them to write their own screenplay, to imaginatively reconstruct the narrative which contains each scene. Despite his insistence to the contrary, such instinct is only heightened by the artist's inclusion of figures that invariably appear isolated, solitary in spirit and place, and imbued with an air of stillness. Exemplified most poignantly by the mysterious, one-armed, bald and portly 'everyman' who stands marooned in the celebrated *Cahill Expressway*, 1962 (National Gallery of Victoria), Smart's protagonists are emotionally remote, distanced and wholly unengaged with either their surrounds or us, the viewer – symbols,



Jeffrey Smart
Cahill Expressway, 1962
oil on plywood
81.9 x 111.3 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
© The Estate of Jeffrey Smart

according to some commentators, of modern man's loneliness and disillusionment. Seemingly oblivious of the viewer and unperturbed by the storm that threatens above, the waiting female figure in *The Footbridge* is similarly enigmatic, provoking mediation upon her circumstance and purpose: What is she contemplating? Is she waiting for someone? If so, for whom? And why in this location?

Like the best of Smart's achievements, *The Footbridge* beguiles both the eye and mind its ambiguity, remaining infinitely suggestive but revealing nothing. Although his works have frequently been construed as bleak, Hopper-esque commentaries on a society alienated by technology or a world impoverished by mass-produced architecture, such pessimistic interpretations would seem to negate Smart's own professed intentions for his art. For, as Barry Pearce elucidates, his paintings '…are, at the end of the day, expressions of himself. Container trucks which pollute cities, highways which have displaced communities, and modulised buildings which have absolved individuals from caring about each other are not in themselves beautiful. They cannot be, except that from the tranquillity of his eighteenth-century farm in Tuscany, Smart has *made* them beautiful by extracting time and noise and pain.'[10] Relentlessly asserting his faith in the timeless beauty he perceives amidst the clutter of contemporary life, Smart's paintings convey rather, a rich sense of optimism despite their occasional uncertainties – a poignant reminder that the things which seem upon first glance to reflect a brutality to the soul can become, ironically, a source of wonder.[11] As Quartermaine ultimately reiterates, '…Smart's paintings are not to be looked through but looked at. If we look through them, we find only the preconceptions we brought with us – by looking at them with the attention they demand we can experience their world.'[12]

1. The artist, cited in Horton, M. (ed.), *Australian Painters of the '70s*, Ure Smith, Sydney, 1975, p. 54
2. Allen, C., 'Introduction' in *Jeffrey Smart*, Philip Bacon Galleries, Brisbane, 2005, p. 3
3. Pearce, B., *Jeffrey Smart*, Sydney, 2005, p. 193
4. The artist, cited in Hutchings, P., 'Some contemporary realisms', 1971, in Smith, B. (ed.), *Concerning contemporary art: The Power Lectures 1968 – 1973*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1974, pp. 124 – 25
5. Capon, E., 'Still, Silent, Composed: The Art of Jeffrey Smart' in *Jeffrey Smart*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1999, p. 16
6. 'Jeffrey Smart's partner Ermes de Zan recalls artist's life in Tuscany', *The Australian*, 21 May 2016
7. The artist, cited in McGrath, S., 'Jeffrey Smart', *Art & Australia*, vo. 7, no. 1, June, 1969, p. 34
8. McDonald, P., *Jeffrey Smart*, Gryphon Books, Melbourne, 1983, p. 78
9. 'The Art of being a Good Detective', *The Age*, 10 May 1989, p. 14
10. Pearce, B, 'Out of Adelaide' in *Jeffrey Smart*, 1999, op. cit., p.32
11. Ibid.
12. Quartermaine, P., *Jeffrey Smart*, Gryphon Books, Melbourne, 1983, p. 78

VERONICA ANGELATOS

FRED WILLIAMS 7

(1927 – 1982)
FOREST POND, 1974
oil on canvas
106.5 x 91.5 cm
signed lower right: Fred Williams.
artist's label attached verso with number, artist's name,
title, medium and dimensions

ESTIMATE: $300,000 – 400,000

PROVENANCE

Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Fred Williams – recent paintings, Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, 5 – 30 April 1975, cat. 12 (label attached verso)
Fred Williams Recent Painting, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 13 – 30 May 1975, cat. 12
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982

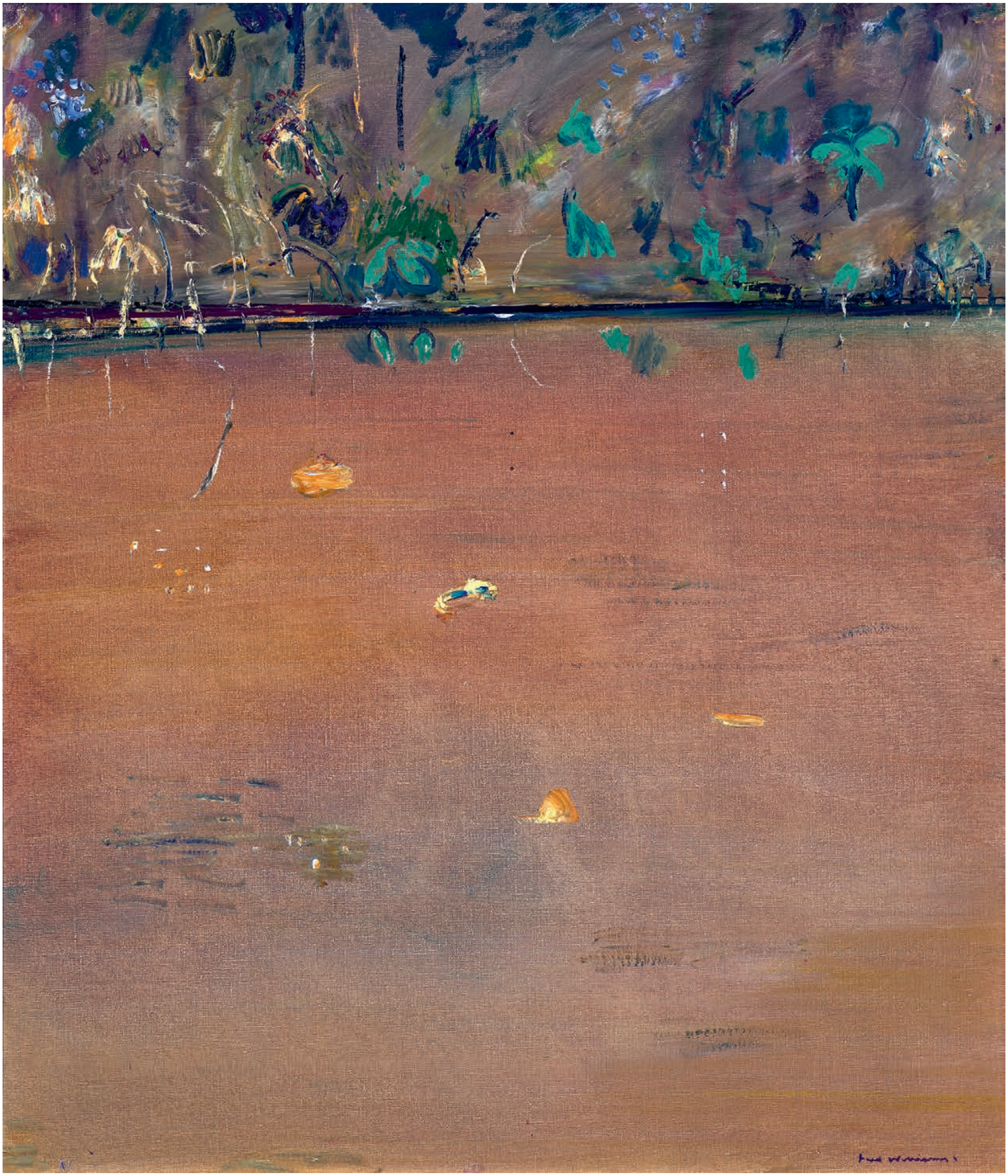
LITERATURE

Faerber, R., 'Impressive Magnitude', *The Australian Jewish Times*, Sydney, 16 April 1975, p.42
Borlase, N., 'A painter at his peak pushes further on', *The Bulletin*, Sydney, vol. 97, no. 4954, 26 April 1975, p. 51
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 101, p. 114 (illus.)
McCaughey, P., *Fred Williams*, Bay Books, Sydney, reprinted 1984, pp. 262 – 265, 267

RELATED WORKS

Forest Pond, 1974, oil on canvas, 183.6 x 152.6 cm, in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Forest Pond, 1974, oil on canvas, 182 x 152 cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Forest Pond Triptych, 1974, oil on canvas, three panels, 107 x 91.5 cm (each) in the collection of the Sydney Opera House Trust, Sydney, illus. in McCaughey, P., *Fred Williams*, Bay Books, Sydney, reprinted 1984, pp. 266 – 267

We are grateful to Lyn Williams for her assistance with this catalogue entry.



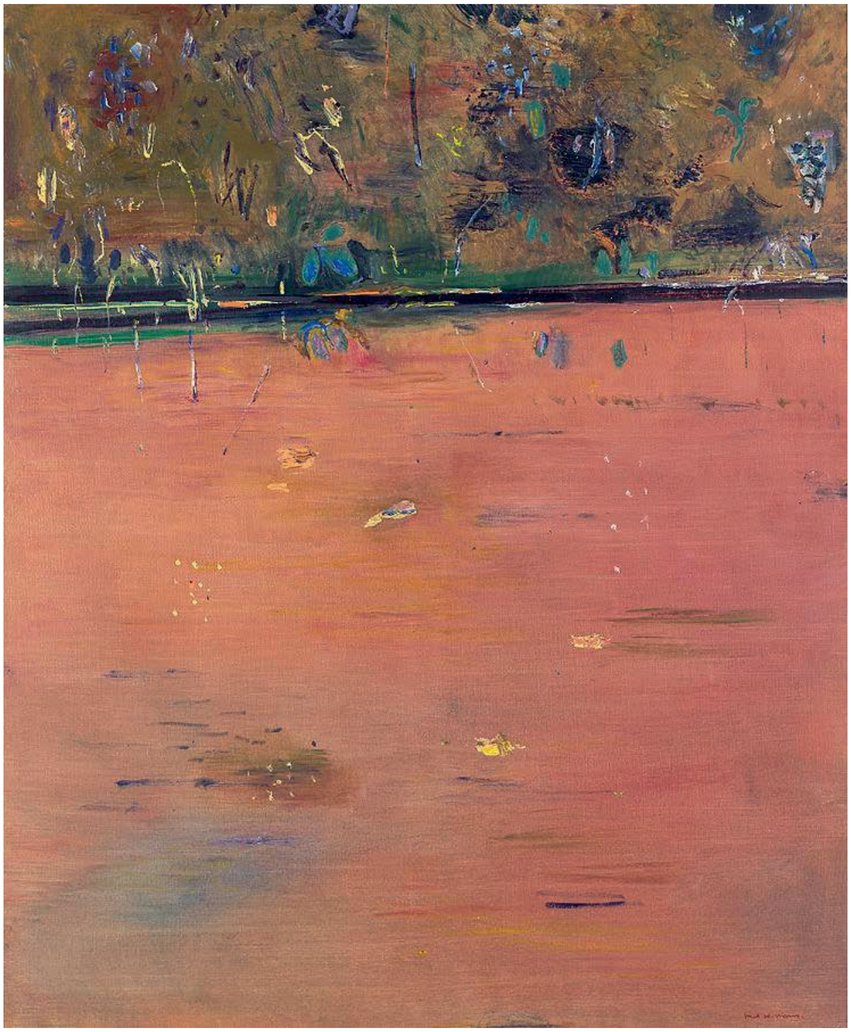
By the end of the 1960s in Australia, Fred Williams was widely acknowledged as one of the leading artists of his generation. Awarded numerous prestigious art prizes – including the 1964 Transfield Prize, the 1966 Georges Invitation Art Prize and in 1967, the Art Gallery of New South Wales' Wynne Prize for landscape painting (which he won again a decade later) – a catalogue raisonné of his etchings had been published, and in 1970, the first major exhibition to feature his work in a public gallery took place. Titled *Heroic Landscape*, the exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria paired Williams with Arthur Streeton, one of Australia's most revered and celebrated landscape painters.

Williams was never one to rest on his laurels however, and the ensuing years saw him radically change his approach, so much so, that Patrick McCaughey describes 1971 – 74 as 'the most turbulent period in his art.'[1] The most obvious shift was his palette, which was seemingly transformed with the introduction of unmixed primary colours and an array of other vivid hues. Writing in his diary in early 1972, Williams noted, 'I have a fierce desire to paint colour… I decide to completely? alter my palette – the primary colours & the corresponding colour[s] on either side of [them on the colour wheel] plus the secondary Orange, Green & Violet – I am ready to do this.'[2] The following day, in addition to listing the colours that would make up his new palette – Cobalt and Cerulean Blue, Naples Yellow, Cadmium Orange, Deep Vermilion, Winsor Violet and Titanium White, among others – he affirmed, 'I have made a major change… & I cannot wait to try it out!'[3]

Alongside this new chromatic direction was a marked shift in Williams' outdoor painting practice. While gouache, a quick-drying medium composed of watercolour mixed with white pigment, had long been his preferred medium for working outdoors, Williams now began to use oil paint on his excursions into the landscape. Painted on canvases measuring approximately 90 x 105 cm – a size which could easily be carried – his oil 'sketches', made directly in front of the subject, are typically more representational than works produced in the studio where, with time and distance, the details of what he had seen outdoors were often distilled and abstracted. They are also wonderfully expressive in terms of the handling of paint, reflecting Williams' emotional response to the scene in front of him and pleasure in the subject.[4] This activity fed Williams' creativity. As he wrote, 'I always enjoy getting out & observing things. It's interesting to me that when I finish painting… my reflexes are so strong that I could paint anything at all – and I mean it – observation is the catalyst for me!'[5]

Williams painted in a diverse range of locations during these years, often in the company of artist, Fraser Fair, who described his companion working 'swiftly, with energy and flow', and noting that 'the meeting with the landscape was his purpose for being alive'.[6] Fair also recalled that looking for places within an hour of Williams' home in Hawthorn, they would refer to the *Age* book, *50 Day Walks Near Melbourne*, ideally finding a good subject within two hundred metres of the carpark.[7] In early 1969, Williams had written in his diary that he intended to paint the Yarra River – known by the Wurundjeri people as Birrarung – from its source in the Yarra Ranges to its mouth at Hobsons Bay in Melbourne's west. This ambition is reflected in many works made during the following years, culminating in the Waterfall series of 1979, and his interest in painting water, whether rivers, swamps, ponds, gorges, tidal flats or the ocean, is a strong and continuing theme throughout Williams' oeuvre.[8]

Williams painted at Ferntree Gully National Park, in the foothills of the Dandenong Ranges to the east of Melbourne, on several occasions in 1974. The area had been badly burnt in the bushfires of 1968, but by this time, the landscape was regenerating and he found the conjunction of a protected, still pond surrounded by new growth around blackened tree trunks a compelling scene. A series of Forest Pond pictures emerged which, in their compositional structure, echo the format he



Fred Williams
Forest Pond, 1974
oil on canvas
183.6 x 152.6 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

had adopted in the Upwey series, with a large open expanse of water sitting beneath a narrow, horizontal strip of vegetation. This painting was begun on site during an outing with Fraser Fair in late October, and alongside a snapshot of the scene, Williams' diary records that several paintings were begun on the day.[10] It is almost possible to imagine we are there, alongside the artists, looking across the pond, which is delicately painted with a sense of translucency that highlights its watery nature, to the rich and varied vegetation – including a tree fern on the right, so distinctive of the region – on the other side.[9] Williams' delight in the subject is palpable, as is the confidence of his gesture and mastery of his medium.

Forest Pond was first exhibited in Williams' solo exhibition at the Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, in 1975 and Georges Mora, the esteemed Melbourne art dealer, purchased it from the exhibition for the collection of the National Australia Bank (NAB). Two other Forest Pond works were also exhibited: similarly scaled, one sold to a private collection in New York, and the larger studio painting – very closely related to the NAB work in terms of its composition – was subsequently acquired by the National Gallery of Victoria.[11] The significance of the subject for Williams is reflected in the fact that he also later produced a triptych which, at almost three metres long, communicates the full breadth and beauty of the scene. The triptych is part of the Sydney Opera House Trust Collection and another version of the subject, which employs a different compositional division and brighter palette, is in the Art Gallery of South Australia.[12]

The enthusiastic confidence Williams had in the new direction of his art proved to be well-founded. The Sydney exhibition was a commercial success and the critical response was equally positive. Alluding to the blockbuster exhibition, *Modern Masters* (from the Museum of Modern Art, New York), that was concurrently showing at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Nancy Borlase enthused, 'it is here, in the Manet to Matisse mainstream, that Fred Williams belongs.'[13] Daniel Thomas elaborated, 'Fred Williams' new paintings… have back-tracked from extreme reduction. The complexity of detail and dazzling light of the Australian landscape are triumphantly captured in… a series of grand vegetation-and-water Forest Ponds [which] pay a kind of homage to Monet… Williams knows who to compete with and who to borrow from, and it is his greedy art history that makes him our best observer of landscape. In this show he looks like the major artist we already knew him to be.'[14]

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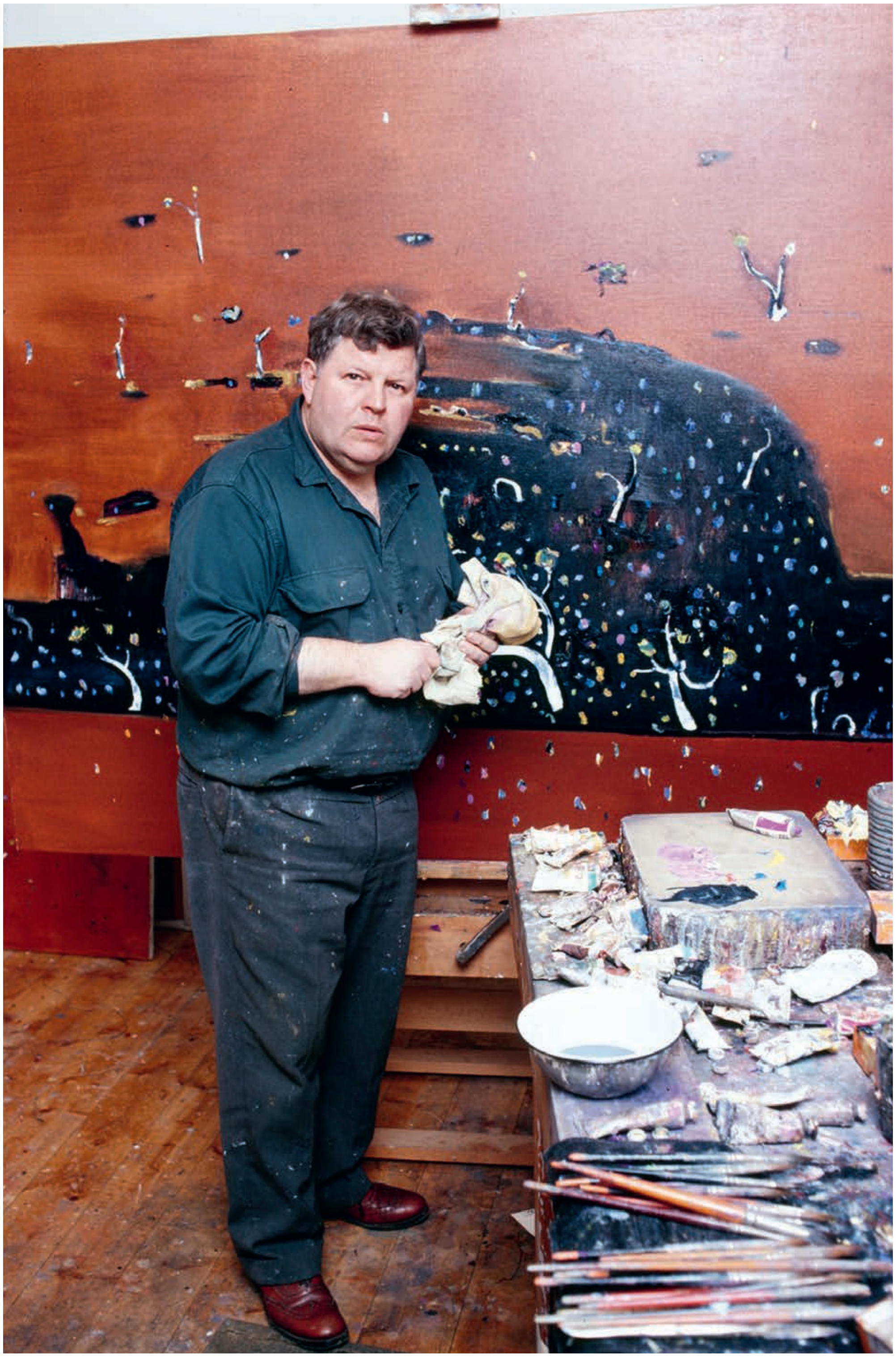
1. McCaughey, P., *Fred Williams 1927 – 1982*, Murdoch Books, Sydney, 1996, p. 225
2. Fred Williams Diary, 4 April 1972 quoted in Mollison, J., *A Singular Vision: The Art of Fred Williams*, Australian National Gallery & Oxford University Press, Canberra, 1989, p. 158
3. Fred Williams Diary, 5 April 1972, ibid.
4. See McCaughey, op. cit., p. 226
5. Fred Williams Diary, 6 March 1974 quoted in Mollison, op. cit., p. 184
6. Mollison, op. cit., pp. 174
7. Ibid., pp. 173-74
8. See Lindsay, R., and Zdanowicz, I., *Fred Williams: Works in the National Gallery of Victoria*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1980, p. 35 and Lindsay, R., *Fred Williams: Water*, McClelland Gallery + Sculpture Park, Langwarrin, 2005, n.p.
9. Conversation with Lyn Williams, 16 December 2021
10. I am grateful to Lyn Williams AM for providing information about this painting and its history.
11. *Forest Pond*, 1974, oil on canvas, 183.6 x 152.6 cm, National Gallery of Victoria, Presented by the National Gallery Women's Association, 1975 (A14-1975)
12. *Forest Pond*, 1975, oil on canvas, 182 x 151 cm, Art Gallery of South Australia, South Australian Government Grant 1975 (757P7)
13. Borlase, N., 'A painter at his peak brushes further on', *The Bulletin*, 26 April 1975 quoted in Hart, D., *Fred Williams: Infinite Horizons*, National Gallery of Victoria, Canberra, 2011, p. 139
14. Thomas, D., 'Official rebels', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 17 April 1975, ibid. p. 142

KIRSTY GRANT



Fred Williams, 1981
photographer: Rennie Ellis
State Library of Victoria, Melbourne

ROGER KEMP

8

(1908 – 1987)
BLUE DIMENSION, 1973
(also known as 'WHOLE')
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
171.0 x 175.5 cm
signed and dated verso: Roger Kemp. / Australia / 1973
signed and inscribed with title on label verso: WHOLE / Roger Kemp
bears inscription with title on stretcher bar verso: WHOLE

ESTIMATE: $30,000 – 50,000

PROVENANCE

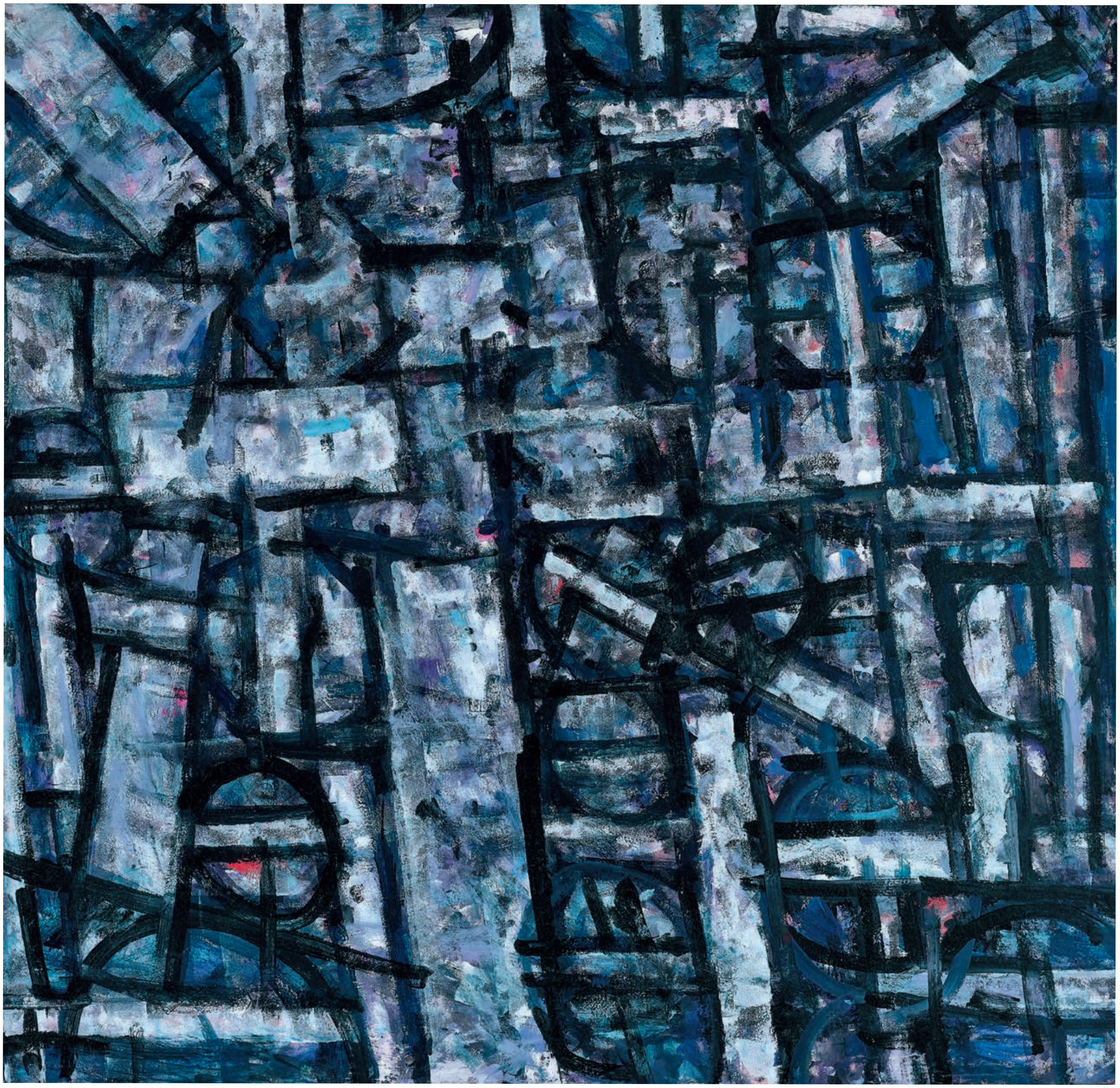
Realities Gallery, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1976 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Roger Kemp, Realities Gallery, Melbourne, 4 – 28 May 1976 , cat. 3 (as 'Blue Dimension')
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 52, p. 65 (illus.)
Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980*, Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 44 (illus.)
Heathcote, C., *The Art of Roger Kemp: A Quest for Enlightenment*, MacMillan, Melbourne, 2007, p. 259



Roger Kemp looms large in the history of twentieth century Australian art. Built around the fundamental geometric forms of the circle, the square and the cruciform, his bold abstractions are distinctive among the work of his peers. Richly infused with gesture, layered colour and texture, they simultaneously reveal the unique vision and hand of the artist, as well as the physicality of his process. Kemp's purpose also set him apart. There is no narrative in his work, no obvious figuration or representational aim. He sought instead, to express a deeper meaning through his art, a personal perspective 'that alluded to the timeless and universal, a means to articulate his experience of a higher truth.'[1]

At the end of the 1960s, Kemp and his family spent two years living in London. Working in a studio at S.P.A.C.E., a Victorian warehouse on the Thames, he was part of a community of committed, professional artists, some of whom shared his interest in abstraction, including fellow Australian, Peter Upward, and the renowned British Op artist, Bridget Riley. The space was vast and the scale of Kemp's work increased accordingly. Often working on mural-like lengths of paper stapled to the wall, he used thick brushes and rollers to create monumental compositions, working freely, 'without traces of mannerism, artifice or guile… There was no apparent struggle, no erasures or revisions.'[2] Christopher Heathcote describes his working method, explaining that he would make a free preparatory sketch in pencil or conté to outline the composition before taking up his brush and improvising. Working throughout the day, he would continue to paint as it got dark, removing his glasses and working intuitively, 'the composition was something felt… that had to be externalised. As long as he could tap a rhythm from within, he would keep working.'[3]

Dedicating himself to painting full-time from 1966, the 1970s was an important decade in Kemp's career, which saw his practice widely acknowledged. His work was included in the inaugural Sydney Biennale (1973), he was awarded an OBE for services to Australian art in 1977, and in 1978, a group of works was acquired for the developing national collection. By this time, Kemp had also established a strong relationship with Marianne Baillieu, who ran Realities Gallery in Melbourne, and she ably and energetically championed his work, presenting it in successful commercial exhibitions and placing it in significant private and public collections. *Blue Dimension*, 1973, was included in his 1976 solo exhibition at Realities and shows Kemp working at his prime. A familiar geometry creates compositional structure – all outlined in black, a cruciform, series of small circles and a patchwork of rectangles are juxtaposed at various angles – but no single element takes precedence over another. Instead, each form is carefully balanced against the next, vibrating with movement and bringing the picture to life in a way that echoes the expressive energy of its painterly creation.

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1. Heathcote, C., *A Quiet Revolution: The Rise of Australian Art 1946 – 1968*, Text Publishing, Melbourne, 1995, p. 7
2. See Heathcote, C., *The Art of Roger Kemp*, Macmillan, Melbourne, 2007, p. 140
3. Ibid., p. 142

KIRSTY GRANT

Portrait of Roger Kemp, 1974
photographer: Richard Beck
Castlemaine Art Museum, Victoria

GEORGE BALDESSIN

9

(1939 – 1978)
THREE–SIDED PERSONAGE, 1974
enamel paint on cast aluminium
102.0 x 31.0 x 33.0 cm
edition: 2/4
inscribed with artist's monogram and numbered at base: gB 2/4
bears Meridian Melbourne, foundry mark at base

ESTIMATE: $80,000 – 120,000

PROVENANCE

The estate of the artist
Australian Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in October 2006 (label attached to base)

EXHIBITED

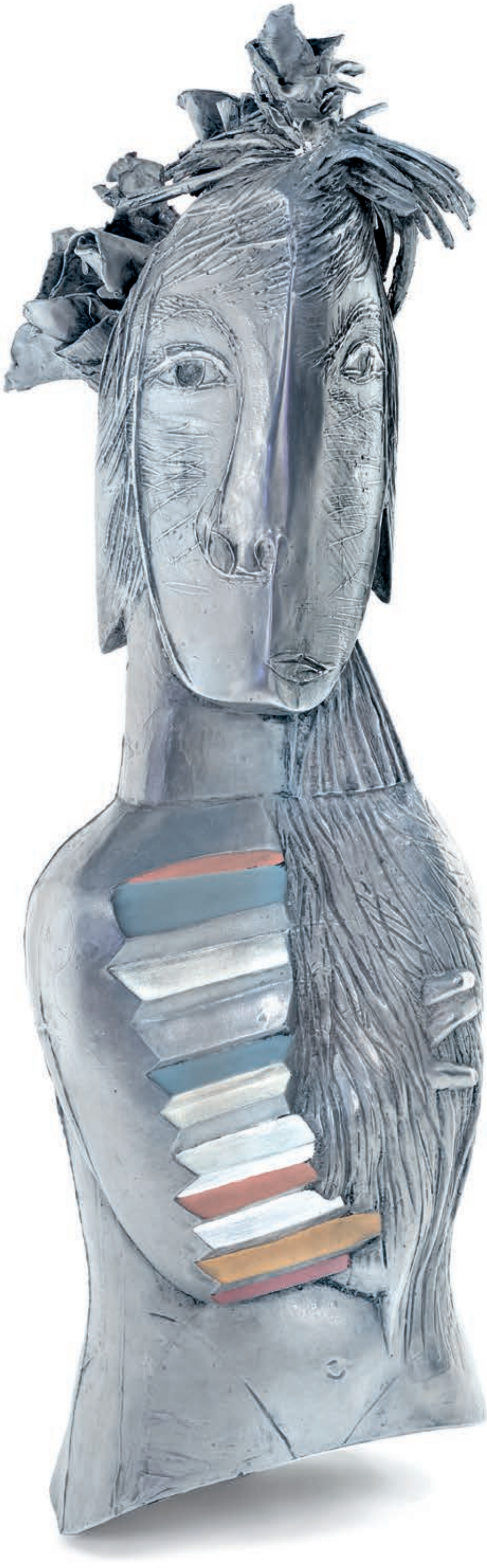
Springfield Art Show in aid of the Association for the Blind, Melbourne, 26 – 29 September 1974 (another example)
George Baldessin: Sculpture and Etchings, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 8 August – 18 September 1983, cat. 124 (another example)
George Baldessin, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria, 21 November 2009 – 14 March 2010 (another example)
Baldessin/Whiteley Parallel Visions, Ian Potter Centre, National Gallery of Victoria Australia, Melbourne, 31 August 2019 – 28 January 2019 (another example)

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R. and Holloway, M. J., *George Baldessin: Sculpture and Etchings*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1983, cat. 124, p. 136 (illus., another example)
Edquist, H., *George Baldessin: Paradox & Persuasion*, Australian Galleries Publishing, Melbourne, 2009, pp. 164, 165 (illus.), 250 (another example)
Grishin, S., *Baldessin/Whiteley Parallel Visions,* National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2018, pp. 124 (illus., another example), 193

George Baldessin experienced meteoric success from the moment of his first solo exhibition at the Argus Gallery, Melbourne in 1964 – described by critic Alan McCulloch at the time as 'the most impressive debut of any Australian born sculptor in the last 20 years'[1], until his untimely death in a car accident in 1978. During this brief fourteen-year period, Baldessin exhibited widely and to much acclaim within Australia and internationally (including representing Australia with fellow artist, Imants Tillers, at the Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil in 1975), and both his prints and sculptures were acquired by state galleries, including by the then-new Australian National Gallery (now National Gallery of Australia).

An Italian immigrant who arrived in Australia at the age of ten, Baldessin studied art at RMIT (the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology) from 1958 to 1961. Yet despite graduating with a Diploma of Fine Art in Painting, it was the printmaking and sculpture studios that held thrall for the young artist, and he was particularly influenced by his teachers in these areas – sculptor Lenton Parr (1924 – 2003) and printmaker Tate Adams (1922 – 2018), the latter of whom was to become a lifelong friend. Importantly, for Baldessin, his relationship with Adams also provided access to the Thursday evening (and later, Friday) etching classes that were reserved for practicing artists, and he swiftly found himself amongst an experienced cohort that included John Brack, Leonard French, and Fred Williams. During this time, Williams was editioning his etchings of audiences and performers at the London



Music Hall, created during his part-time studies at London's Chelsea School of Art, and these were to greatly inspire Baldessin's own, now highly-recognisable images of trapeze artists, acrobats and performers.[2] A notoriously hard worker, and one who was obviously always keen to continue to learn, Baldessin went on to study printmaking at Chelsea School of Art in 1962 (again influenced by Williams), followed by a period at the Brera Academy in Milan in 1963 under the tutelage of Marino Marini (1901 – 1980) and his studio assistant Alik Cavaliere (1926 – 1988), who was to greatly influence Baldessin's work in three-dimensions.

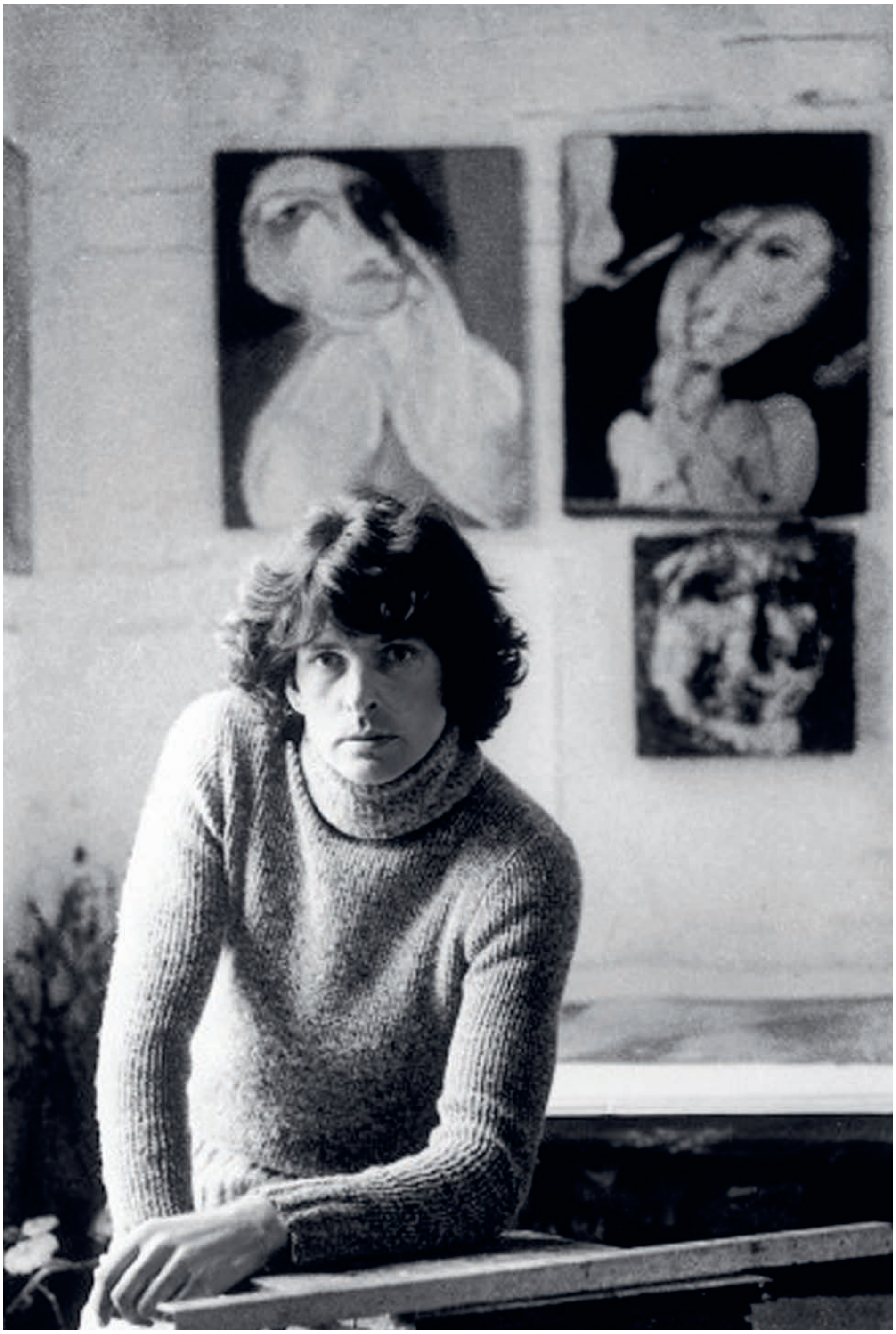
Baldessin's print and sculptural practice fed off one another, and an active process of recycling involving returning to, and reworking of, various motifs, images and interests, is evident across his oeuvre. While his work in both mediums contains lyrical passages of abstraction, he remained committed to figuration, and particularly, to the female form, with its mystery and 'otherness', and its fleshy physicality. As he said: 'Not only am I interested in things that are derived from the human body, but a particular aspect of the human body – that is distorted human bodies, I'm not for these… so-called attractive reproductions of the human body. I want my figures to have a kind of inner impetus.'[3]

Baldessin began experimenting with aluminium, a 'futuristic' medium that encapsulated an undeniably Pop Art aesthetic, in the mid 1960s. As a material, it had several advantages: it had a low melting point, which lessened casting problems; it could be easily fabricated; and importantly, for the young artist, it was inexpensive, light, and came in sheets.[4] The artist's aluminium sculptures are also closely related to his innovative silver foil prints, which were complex to produce (with a strike rate of one in five), and whose highly reflective surfaces mimicked the appearance of 'the shiny, inked-up plate with the iridescent quality of the light reflected on the polished plate surface'.[5] Interestingly, this ongoing dialogue between sculpture and printmaking is powerfully captured in *Three-Sided Personage*, 1974 where the artist's expressive incisions directly into the mould from which the sculpture is cast are not unlike the practice of etching into a metal plate. As Elizabeth Cross has noted, '…the surface as animating force in a work of art was central to Baldessin's art.'[6]

With its combination of two profiles, *Three-sided Personage* is an intriguing work which captures a sense of both internal struggle and existential angst, made manifest upon the body. One side of the figure's torso bears a concertina-like architectural element that appears throughout Baldessin's work, while the other may well be wearing the hairshirt associated with Mary Magdalene that Baldessin recreated in his depictions of the saint after seeing such imagery during his travels in Europe. As Baldessin recalled, 'In Paris I used to walk down the Rue Saint-Denis, the prostitutes' street, and as autumn was coming on, I noticed that the girls, the Madeleines of Rue Saint-Denis, started wearing a kind of rusty red-coloured fur coat… They were twentieth-century Mary Magdelenes walking the street of Les Halles and near the Georges Pompidou Centre … the Madeleine of my drawings became the personage which wasn't the Rue Saint Denis prostitutes and wasn't the Mary Magdalene but was both'.[7] Deliberately enigmatic and elusive, the figure's bifurcated face gives little away. As this and other titles of the artist's work suggest, are Baldessin's 'personages' simply playing a role?

1. McCulloch, A., *The Herald*, 16 June 1964 as quoted in Lindsay, R. & Holloway, M.J., *George Baldessin: Sculpture and Etchings. A Memorial Exhibition*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1983, p. 30. As Baldessin's friend and fellow artist Jan Senbergs recalled of this exhibition: '… anyone who was there at the time realized they were witnessing the emergence of a major talent who was going to make a definite mark on the Australian scene…': see Senbergs, J., 'Recalling George' in *George Baldessin Prints 1963-1978*, Australian Galleries, Melbourne, 1997, p. 6
2. See Lindsay & Holloway, ibid.
3. *Baldessin / Whiteley: Parallel Visions* exhibition labels, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2018, https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Baldessin-Whiteley-Large-print-labels.pdf (viewed 16 December 2021)
4. Lindsay & Holloway, op .cit., p. 120
5. ibid., p. 78
6. Cross, E. 'George Baldessin 1939 – 1978' in *George Baldessin Prints 1963 – 1978*, op. cit., p. 16
7. *Baldessin / Whiteley: Parallel Visions* exhibition labels, op. cit.

KELLY GELLATLY



George Baldessin
photographer unknown
Australian Galleries, Melbourne

JOHN OLSEN **10**

born 1928
DARK VOID, 1976
oil on canvas
137.0 x 152.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: John Olsen / 76

ESTIMATE: $150,000 – 200,000

PROVENANCE

Australian Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in August 1977 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

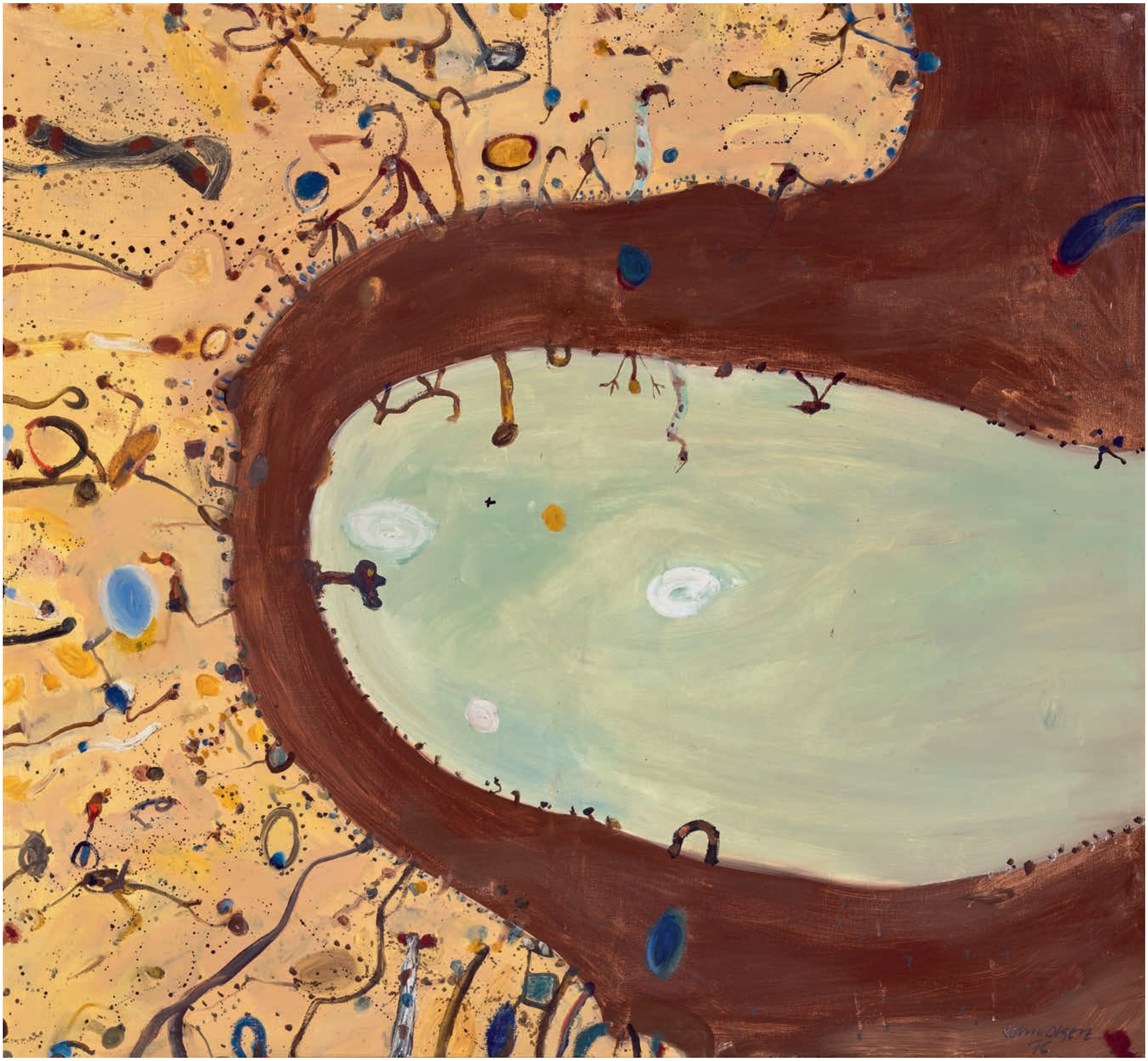
John Olsen: Recent oil paintings, gouaches, drawings and etchings, Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane, 8 – 28 May 1976
John Olsen: Recent Works, Australian Galleries, Melbourne, 2 – 16 August 1977, cat. 3 (label attached verso)
Australian Art: Colonial to Contemporary, Deutscher Fine Art, Melbourne, May – June 1995, cat. 94 (illus. in exhibition catalogue, p. 71)
John Olsen: The You Beaut Country, The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia at Federation Square, Melbourne, 16 September 2016 – 12 February 2017, and Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 10 March – 12 June 2017

LITERATURE

Hart, D., *The Art of John Olsen*, Doctor of Philosophy thesis, Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, 1997, pl. 86, p. 150
Moncrief, M., 'Recovery a fine art for NAB finance man', *The Age*, Melbourne, 2 September 2006 (as 'Dark Wood')
McGrath, S., 'A Remote Eden', *Art and Australia*, Fine Arts Press, Sydney, vol. 14, no. 2, October – December 1976, pp. 148 (illus., dated as 1975), 150
Hart, D., *John Olsen*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1991, pl. 86, pp. 138 (illus.), 214
McGregor, K., and Zimmer, J., *John Olsen: Journeys Into the You Beaut Country*, Thames and Hudson, Melbourne, 2016, pp. 32, 131 (illus.), 207
Ferrier, S., 'John Olsen retrospective: More than 100 artworks capture Australian landscape', *ABC News*, Melbourne, 15 September 2016

RELATED WORK

The Simpson Desert Approaching the Void, 1976, oil on canvas, 151.5 x 136.4 cm, in the collection of the Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane



For many artists, there is a motif to which they return at numerous points in their career, reinterpreting and drawing new inspiration. For Sidney Nolan, it was Ned Kelly; for Paul Cézanne, Mont Sainte-Victoire. For John Olsen, the motif is Lake Eyre. Its significance is such that Patrick McCaughey has described it as being central to 'four decades of Olsen's Dreaming'.[1] 'I've been nearly drowned on the blessed lake when our boat sank in a sudden storm; nearly been sucked under by the quicksand-like treacherous black mud; nearly been blown away by winds that howl in at midnight, buffeting your tent; I've had desert sand blow into my eyes, my paint, the camp oven, and ruin my beautiful fish paellas ... but all in all, I've had a fabulous time there.'[2]

Located 700 kilometres north of Adelaide, Olsen first visited Lake Eyre in October 1974 in the company of naturalist Vincent Serventy. They had journeyed to see the lake's largest flood in 500 years, an experience which profoundly affected the artist's way of interpreting his world. 'The lake might be viewed as an unconscious plughole of Australia, a mental landscape... Because it is 13 metres below sea level - and perhaps nowhere in Australia does one have the feeling of such complete emptiness - covered by a bowl of endless sky with inviting silences, there is, as you stand on the edge of the lake, a feeling that you are standing on the edge of a void.'[3] For Olsen, Lake Eyre was important both visually and conceptually, as a place of contradictions – of fullness and emptiness, life and death.

Exploring these ideas about 'the void' and 'the edge', *Dark Void*, 1976 features prominently among the most important early paintings inspired by this encounter and significantly, was featured in the recent retrospective of John Olsen's work organised by the National Gallery of Victoria, *You Beaut Country* (2017) alongside another major work on the subject, *The Simpson Desert Approaching the Void*, 1976 (Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane). Like the artist Ian Fairweather, who he greatly admired, Olsen was fascinated by Chinese art and literature, and found in the vast expanse of the lake a strong association with Sung Dynasty painting and the importance of space. Thus, in *Dark Void*, 1976 he presents a perfect encapsulation of his artistic predecessors' interpretation of the void as evoking the concept of 'everything and nothingness', 'a place for contemplation, a vast, engulfing space.'[4] Set on a highly tilted plane that may be viewed on a macro - and micro - level, Olsen here depicts the lake as it begins to dry up. In stark contrast to his interpretations elsewhere of the waterhole teeming with life, now he offers a tougher, more sombre, brooding sense of the place (and self) in the accentuation of the dark-brown rim of sludge around the lake, from which a very small self-portrait extends into its crystalline emptiness. As Olsen observed during one of his trips,

'When full, Lake Eyre is Australia's largest freshwater lake and teems with bird, fish and animal life. As the waters evaporate and it begins to recede it becomes progressively saltier, eventually returning to a dry saltpan where most forms of life are unable to survive…. At a certain point, the lake turns all crimson coloured. It becomes too salty. There's millions of fish just lying on the edge, dead pelicans … There it is and there it isn't.'[5]

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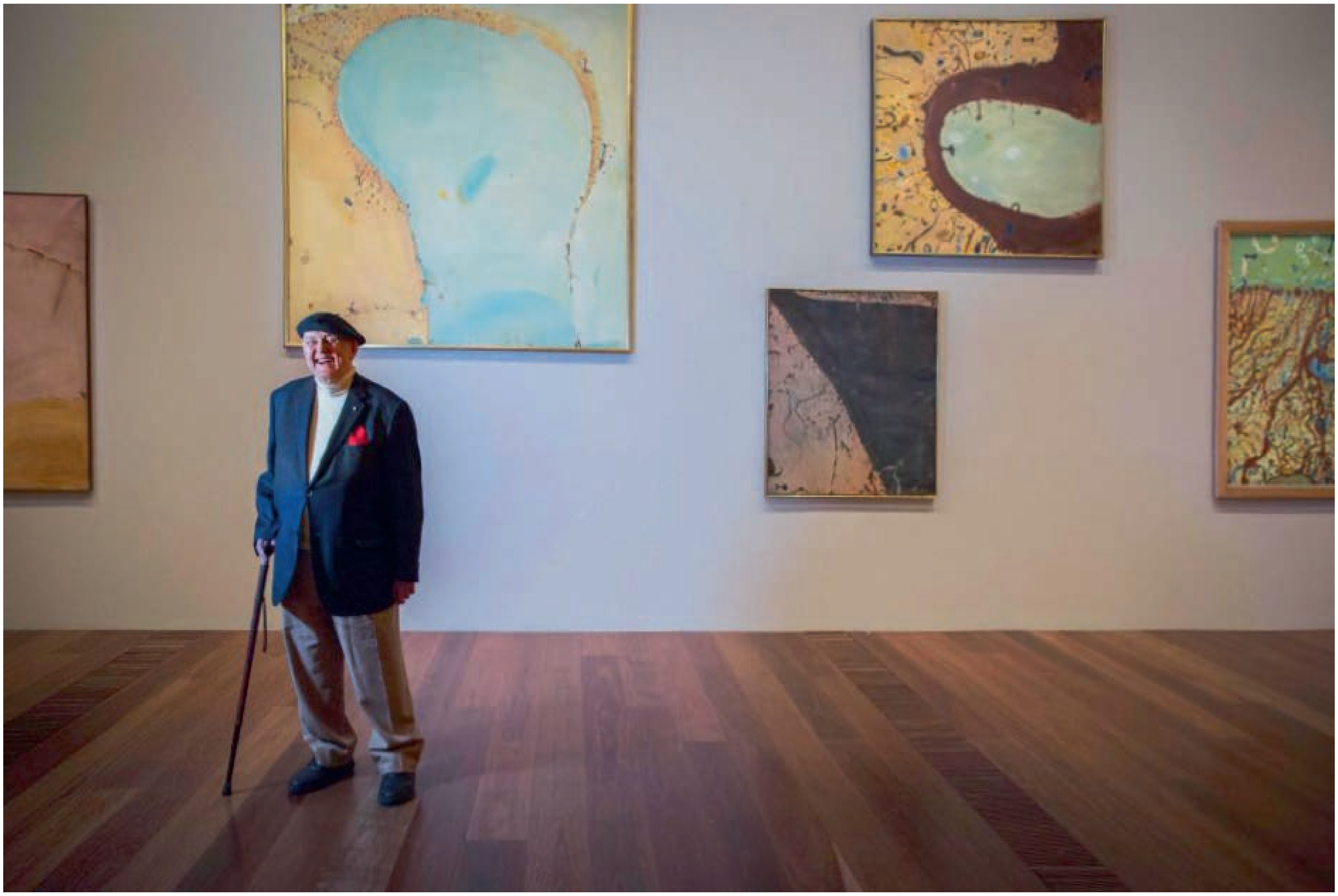
1. McCaughey, P., *Why Australian Painting Matters*, The Miegunyah Press and Text Publishing, Melbourne, 2014, p. 236
2. Olsen, quoted in Hawley, J., 'John Olsen', *Encounters with Australian Artists*, University of Queensland Press, Queensland, 1993, p. 134
3. Olsen, quoted in Hart, D, *John Olsen*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 2000 (revised edition), p. 133
4. Hart, D., ibid., p. 135
5. Olsen, quoted in *John Olsen: The You Beaut Country*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, artwork labels.

ANDREW GAYNOR



John Olsen at his retrospective exhibition, *The You Beaut Country, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2016*
Dark Void pictured second from right
photographer: Margaret Burin, ABC News

GUY GREY–SMITH

11

(1916 – 1981)
NORTHERN TREE, 1978
oil and beeswax on gauze on composition board
90.5 x 122.5 cm
signed and dated lower right: G Grey Smith / 78
signed and inscribed with title verso:
GUY GREY–SMITH / 'NORTHERN TREE' / NO. 2

ESTIMATE: $35,000 – 45,000

PROVENANCE

Gallery 52, Perth
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in December 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Guy Grey–Smith, Gallery 52, Perth, 13 September – 3 October, 1979, cat. 2
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 14
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 13; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 41, p. 54 (illus.)
Gaynor, A., *Guy Grey–Smith: Life Force*, University of Western Australia Publishing, Perth, 2012, pp. 147, 197, 244 (illus.)

In 1976, Guy Grey-Smith was honoured with a full-scale retrospective at the Art Gallery of Western Australia which then toured to the Queensland Art Gallery before closing in February 1977.[1] Released from the extreme pressure that such events put on an artist, he immediately returned to exploring his home state, as he had done regularly with his family from the late 1950s. Whilst these were formerly done by car and tent, his purchase of a second-hand Cessna aircraft in 1975 opened further horizons, particularly in the far north and north-east. *Northern Tree*, 1978, dates from this period of renewal, viscerally capturing the heat of the land, its unexpected colours and the tenacity of the indigenous plants which grow there. In early years of the second decade of this century, the National Australia Bank hung this painting prominently at their Perth headquarters as a statement of intent about the company's commitment to Western Australia.

Grey-Smith was one of the most influential post-war artists in Western Australia, particularly when considering his teaching, advocacy, mentorship and, importantly, his example as an artist who ensured he was also self-supporting. He studied at London's Chelsea School of Arts from 1946-47 and, like many of his generation, Cézanne was a formative influence; but Grey-Smith also admired the richness of Eugène Delacroix's paintings and the audacious colour-shifts used by the Fauves. In 1954, Grey-Smith returned to London where he trained further as a fresco artist, which introduced a more tactile approach to his painterly process. Indeed, he was already utilising scrapers and paint bulked up by additives before his exposure to the work of Nicolas de Staël, an artist with whom he is often simplistically compared.

In *Northern Tree* the confidence of Grey-Smith's mature vision is on full display, his artistic equivalent to nature 'which is so strong and so perfect in itself.'[2] The deep crimson ground is suggestive of approaching dusk after another heated day in the far-north when the land still swelters with radiant heat; and the blocks of pigment marking the scrapers' passage echo the sharp edges and dark shadows of that particular environment. *Northern Tree* was included in the artist's last solo exhibition in Perth before ill-health overtook him, a powerful coda to his local career. It is also instructive to compare Grey-Smith's paintings of the Pilbara with those painted shortly after by Fred Williams, who only flew in then out of the region, unlike Guy's true immersion. The artist-critic Elwyn Lynn was one to notice the difference, dismissing Williams' work as being 'a contest between the grand and the finicky' when compared to the powerful inland presence of such works as Grey-Smith's *Northern Tree*.[3]

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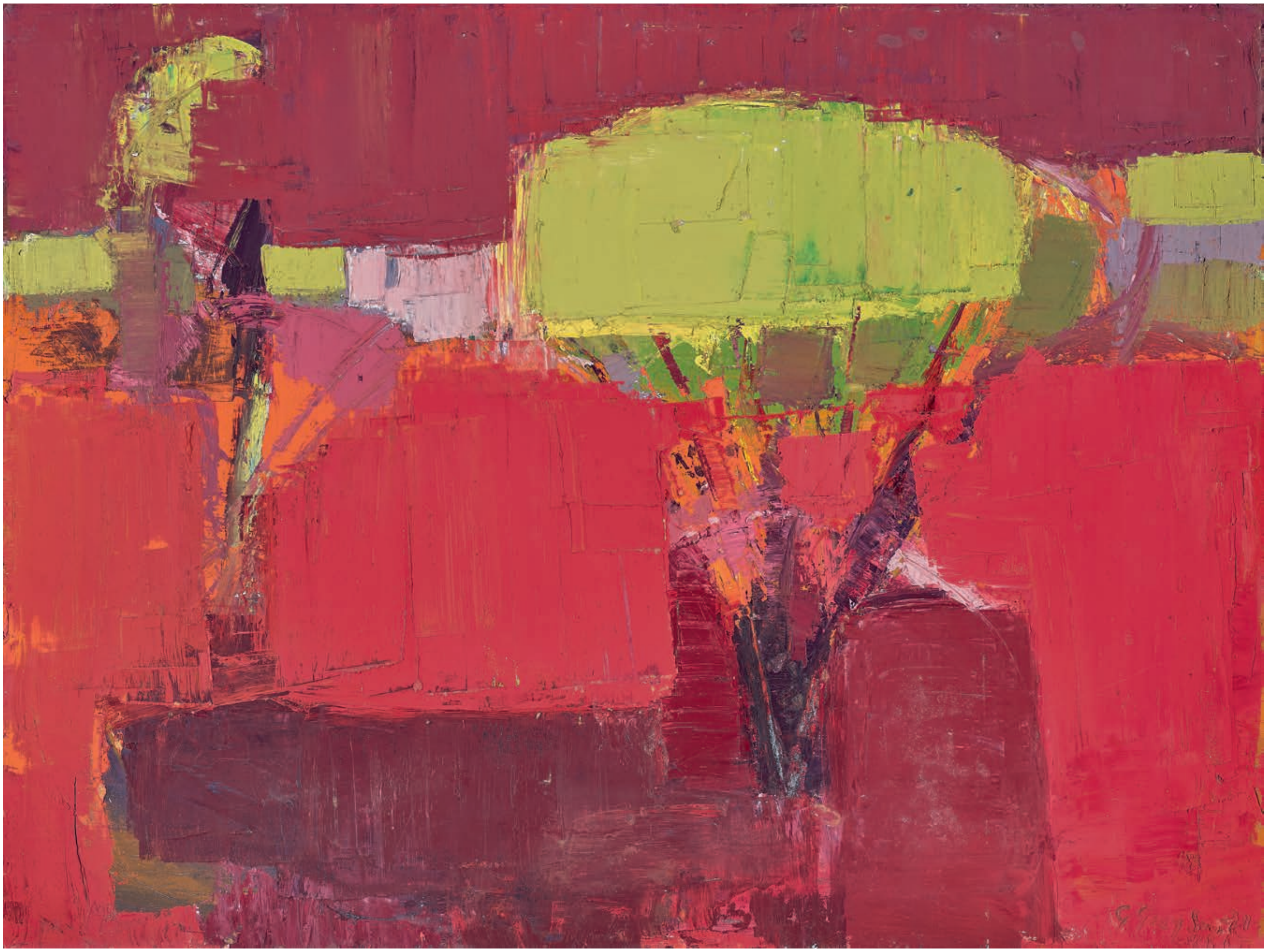
1. *Guy Grey-Smith Retrospective*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 11 November – 12 December 1976 and Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, 13 January – 15 February 1977
2. Guy Grey-Smith, Hazel de Berg interview, 1963, quoted in Harpley, M., *Guy Grey-Smith: art as life*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, p. 14
3. Lynn, E., 'The thrust of Freud', *Weekend Australian*, Sydney, 25 June 1988

ANDREW GAYNOR



JOHN OLSEN 12

born 1928
SMALL STREAMS RUNNING INTO A BIG RIVER, 1990
oil on canvas
135.5 x 151.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: John / Olsen / 90

ESTIMATE: $150,000 – 200,000

PROVENANCE

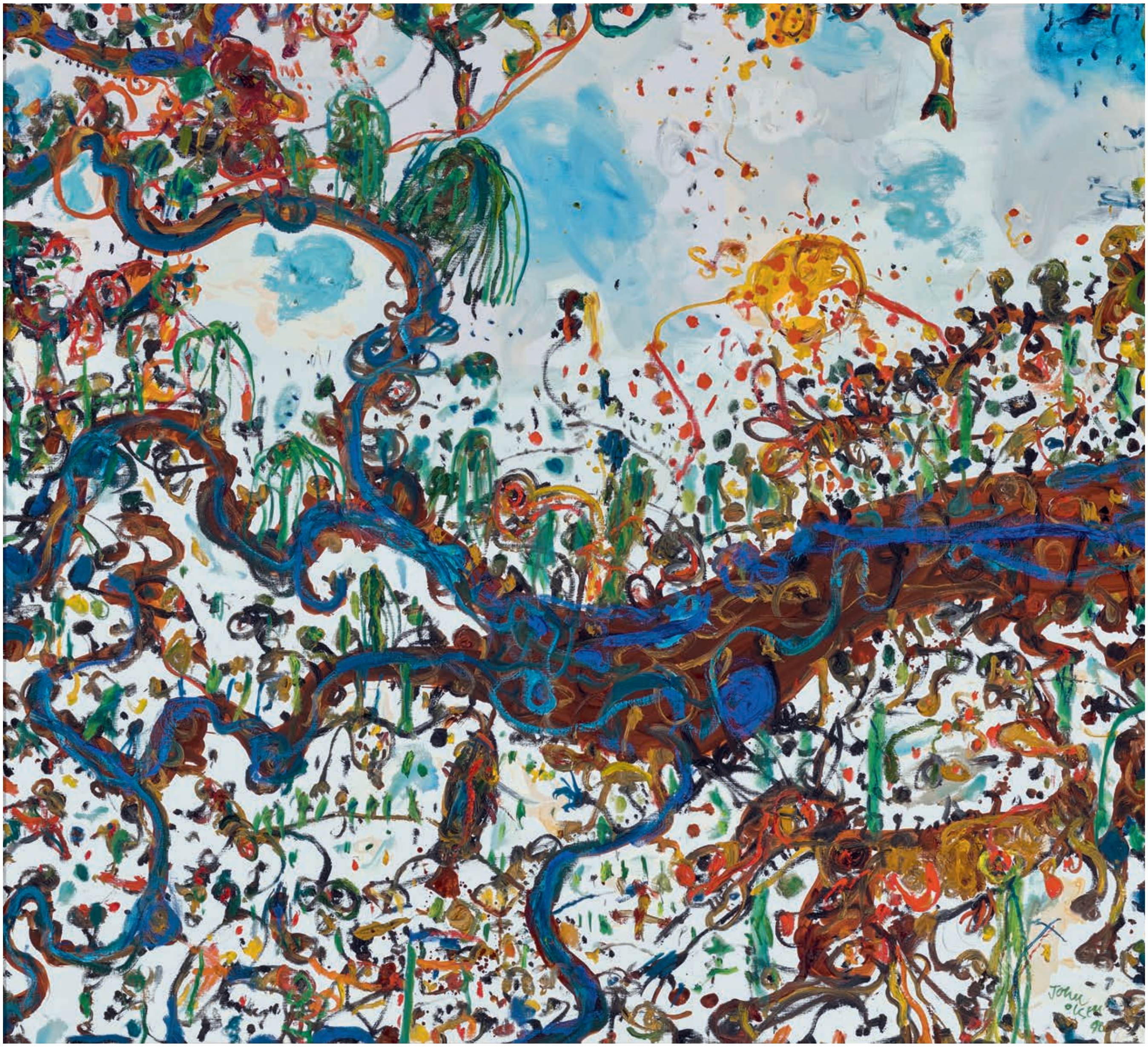
Australian Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in November 1990 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

National Australia Bank Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, October 1991

LITERATURE

The National Australia Bank Art Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1991, p. 7 (illus.)



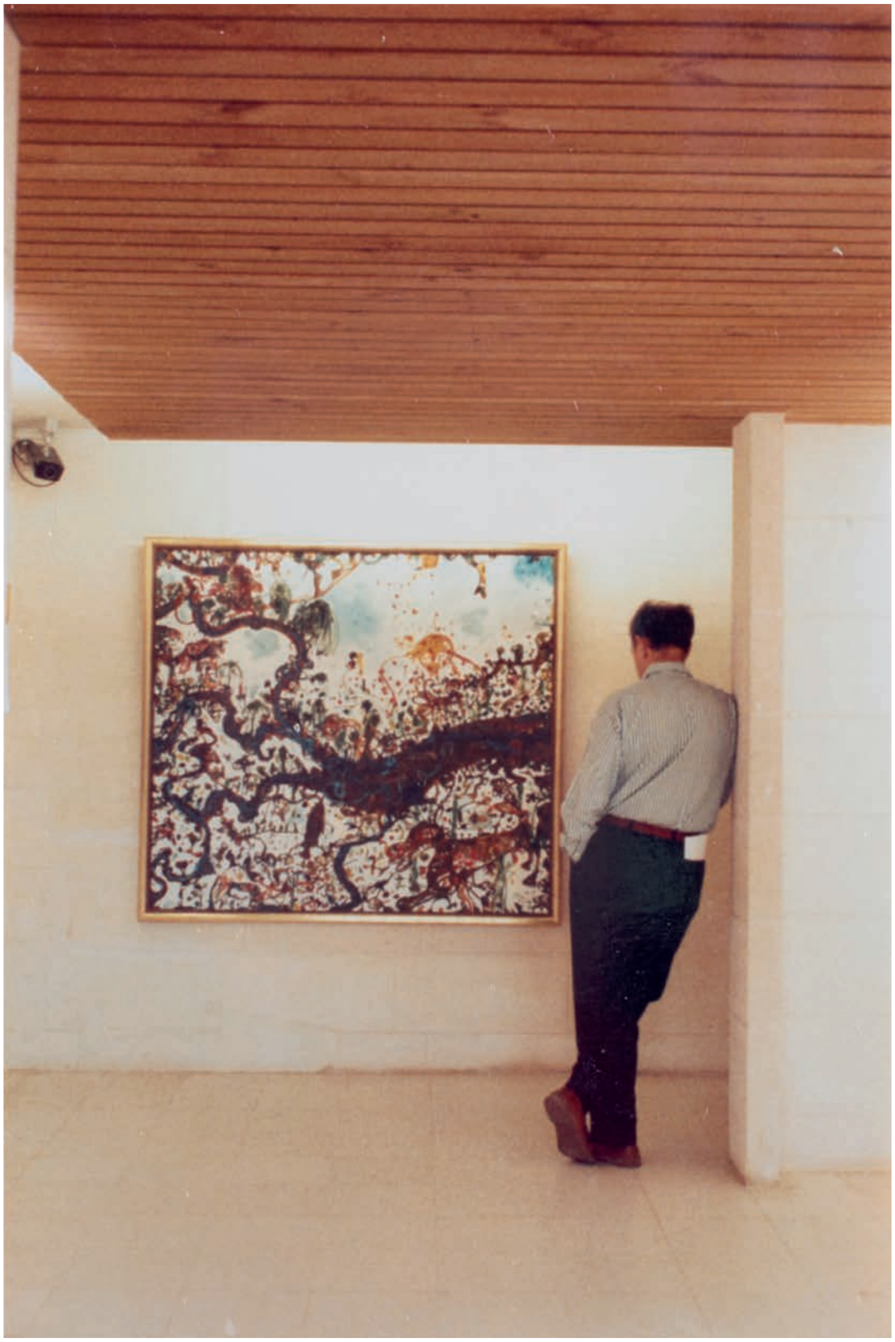
Hailed as Australia's greatest living artist, John Olsen – who is now in his early nineties – has lived a life of intense creativity, and the pleasure he finds in the world around him is palpable throughout his work. The landscape has been a primary subject, from the *You Beaut Country* series of the mid-1960s which captured the unique nature of Australia in compositions characterised by lively line and vital colour, to depictions of Kati Thanda/Lake Eyre the following decade, more austere but still teeming with life and incident. Striving to express the experience of the complete landscape in his pictures, Olsen explained, '... I also wanted to really come to terms with the experience of a total landscape. Not like there is the foreground, there is the middle distance and there is the horizon. I wanted that overall feeling of travelling over the landscape. There you can see the dry creek beds, the nervous system… which when you are just on the ground you don't witness at all. Then you begin to somehow see the wholeness… It's more than the present, it's the past and projects itself into the future.'[1]

In *Small Streams Running into a Big* River, 1990, a series of vivid blue lines meandering across the canvas depict the river and tributaries of the title. This dancing, calligraphic line emerged early on in Olsen's career – and has remained a key element of his pictorial language – growing out of Paul Klee's notion of drawing as 'taking a line for a walk'. Olsen extended the concept however, taking his line – whether drawn or painted – on a walk through the landscape and using it to record the experience of being in the natural environment rather than just looking at it.[2] Olsen's imaging of the landscape acknowledges the diverse habitats which are incorporated within it and he represents plants, animals and insects as vital elements of a complex and interconnected whole. Here, alongside the various watercourses and their riverbanks, we see a variety of plants painted in rich shades of green, and a visual cacophony of other dots, daubs and squiggles which express the living energy of this environment. Although he adopts a bird's-eye view to depict the river and streams, beyond their boundaries we seem to be looking up, towards the open sky, in a complex composition that defies expectations of pictorial logic.

Olsen's fascination with the natural world in all its myriad forms has sustained a creative practice that now spans more than seven decades. His distinctive style of exuberant mark-making, combined with a mastery of colour, have charted the countryside, the coast, deserts and even the city, in images which reflect a strong sense of place and a distinctly Australian sensibility. His contribution to Australian art has been widely acknowledged, from the Wynne Prize for landscape painting, awarded in 1969 and 1985; the Sulman prize in 1989; the Archibald in 2005 – for *Self-portrait, Janus faced* – and major exhibitions devoted to his art, most recently, the retrospective exhibition shown in Melbourne and Sydney in 2016 – 17.

1. Hurlston, D., & Edwards, D. (eds.), *John Olsen – The You Beaut Country,* National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2016, p. 10
2. See Hart, D., *John Olsen*, Craftsman House, North Ryde, 2000, p. 38

KIRSTY GRANT



John Olsen's 'Small Streams Running into Big River' exhibited in the National Australia Bank Art Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, at Heide Park and Art Gallery, 1991
photographer unknown

HOWARD ARKLEY **13**
(1951 – 1999)
WATERFALL 2, 1988
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
175.5 x 135.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
Howard Arkley / Waterfall. 2. / 1988

ESTIMATE: $100,000 – 150,000

PROVENANCE

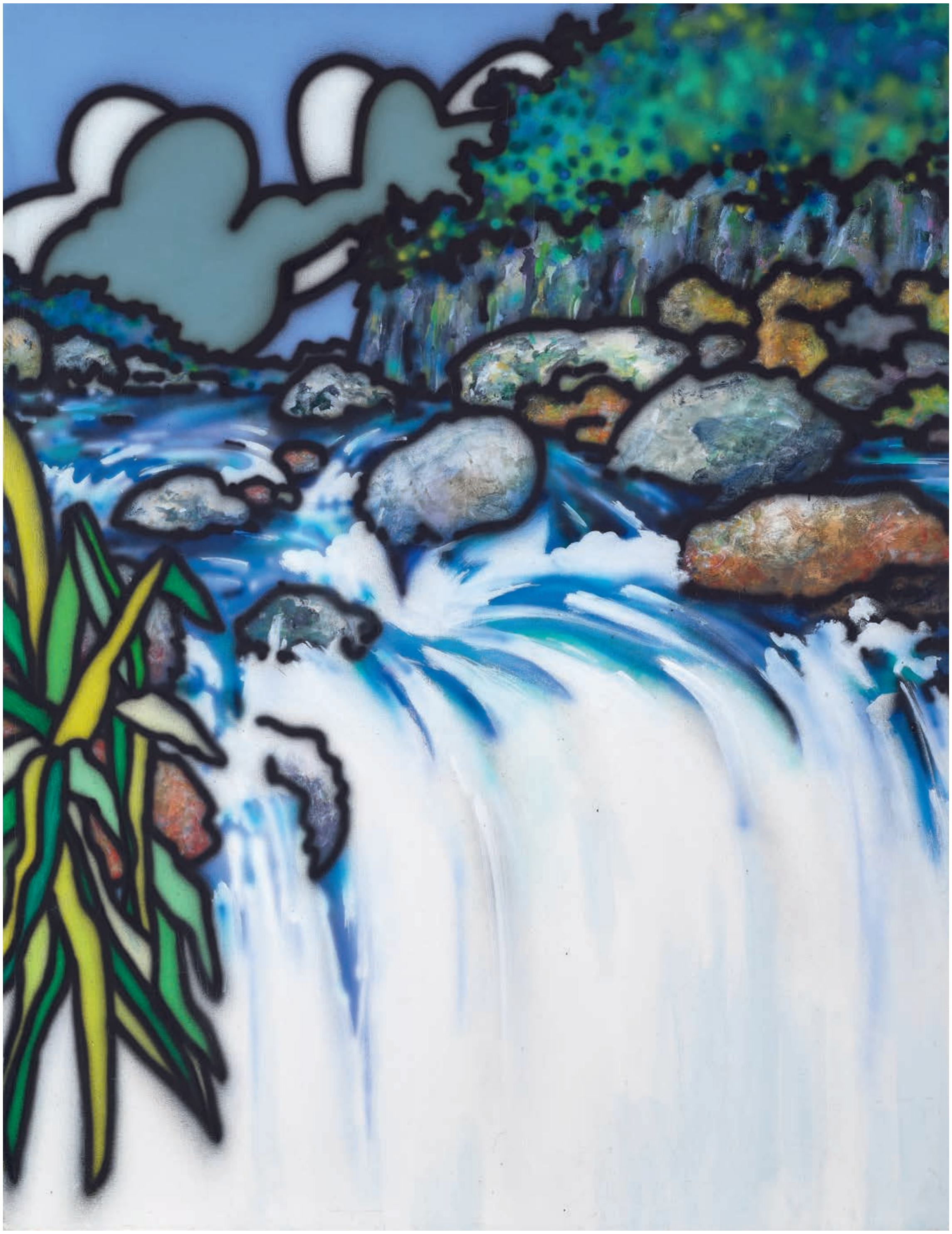
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in December 1988 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The National Australia Bank Art Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, October 1991
Australian Art: Colonial to Contemporary, Deutscher Fine Art, Melbourne, May – June 1995, cat. 111 (illus. in exhibition catalogue, p. 84)

LITERATURE

The National Australia Bank Art Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1991, p. 16 (illus.)
Simmonds, D., ‘New & Notable: Which Bank’, *The Bulletin*, Sydney, 15 November 1991, p. 21 (illus.)
Howard Arkley Online Catalogue Raisonné: [https://www.arkleyworks.com/blog/2009/11/21/waterfall–2–1988/] (accessed 7/06/21)



© The Estate of Howard Arkley. Licensed by Kalli Rolfe Contemporary Art

The year 1988 was a significant one for Howard Arkley, as he experienced the critical and financial success of his first major exhibition solely devoted to his paintings of suburban houses, *Howard Arkley: Recent Paintings – Houses & Homes* at Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne. With their areas of high-keyed colour and black airbrushed outlines, and with subjects ranging from established middle class houses to inner-city flats and newer dwellings from the city's outer suburbs[1], these are the works that came to signal the artist's signature style, along with his public identification as painter of 'the so-called "suburban dreaming"'.[2] This exhibition also introduced the first of Arkley's Shadow Factories series (1988 – 90), whose smoke-filled skies filled from the towers of industrial buildings share a similar treatment to the airbrushed cloud forms in *Waterfall 2*, 1988 – while of course being far less bucolic in nature.

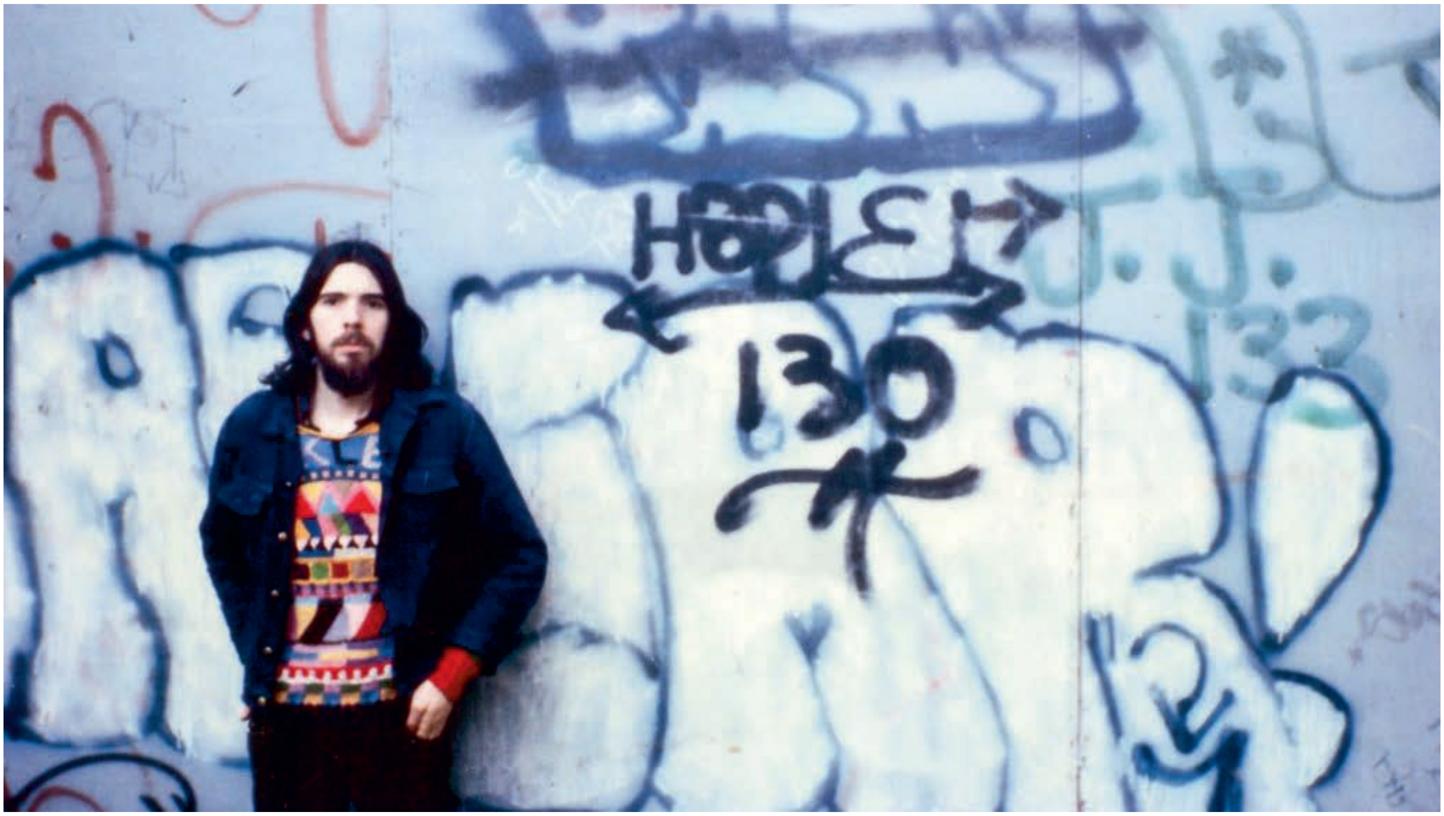
Waterfall 2 was commissioned by Arkley's gallerist Georges Mora, who was engaged as a consultant for the National Australia Bank on the development of the collection. Mora encouraged Arkley, along with other artists, to produce a large-scale canvas on the subject of 'the river', which was a central theme of many of the works acquired between 1988 and 1993.[3] However, true to form, Arkley deviated from this suggestion and did his own thing.

While atypical in subject matter, *Waterfall 2* is classic Arkley, with its combination of flat blocks of colour and painterly passages and its confident airbrushed lines. The work also conveys the artist's deft combination of brushwork and patterning, which is more often characteristically ascribed in his practice to surface interiors or the exterior of buildings. *Waterfall 2* captures Arkley's skill as a technician, with passages of paint used to provide shape and texture to rock forms and the rush of water as it cascades down the waterfall. Here, rather than embodying the 'zing' and orchestrated excess of Arkley's usual combination of colour and decoration, the artist uses airbrushed dots to evoke the dappled light and gentle movement of foliage in the natural environment.

The landscape was neither Arkley's natural habitat nor subject of choice and it is perhaps not surprising to learn that the artist was challenged by the realisation of this work, producing 'an unusually extensive quantity of preparatory material'[4] for it, indicative of his struggle. Interestingly, despite this painting being titled *Waterfall 2*, no evidence has been found of a previous version. As Arkley remarked to Richard Brown the year after the painting was made: 'The subjects that I choose are very impersonal… It's all about the Australian suppressed experience in the suburbs… It wouldn't be appropriate to go out and do rural landscape painting using this approach, I've tried and it doesn't work very well'.[5] Yet despite Arkley's discomfort with this subject matter and his execution of it, he nevertheless created, in the contested year of Australia's Bicentenary, a powerful evocation of a tranquil outdoor scene which adroitly sidesteps the nationalistic rhetoric that can often accompany depictions of the Australian landscape.

1. See Arkley Works: https://www.arkleyworks.com/blog/2009/11/21/howard-arkley-recent-paintings-houses-and-homes-tolarno-aug-sept-1988/ (viewed 15 December 2021)
2. Gregory, J., *Carnival in Suburbia: The Art of Howard Arkley*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2006, p. 1
3. This aspect of the collection was showcased in 1991 in the exhibition *National Australia Bank Collection: Rivers in Australian Art* at Heide Park and Art Gallery (now Heide Museum of Modern Art)
4. See Arkley Works: https://www.arkleyworks.com/blog/2009/11/21/waterfall-2-1988/
5. Brown, R., 'Spraying the Suburban Dream: Howard Arkley', *Tension*, 18, 1989, p. 39

KELLY GELLATLY



Howard Arkley in New York wearing his 'Arkley' jumper, November 1977
photographer: Elizabeth Gower

WILLIAM DELAFIELD COOK

14

(1936 – 2015)
MOOTWINGEE, 1990
synthetic polymer paint on linen
110.0 x 197.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: Delafield Cook 90

ESTIMATE: $150,000 – 200,000

PROVENANCE

Australian Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in September 1990 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

National Australia Bank Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, October 1991
Australian Art: Colonial to Contemporary, Deutscher Fine Art, Melbourne, May – June 1995, cat. 110 (illus. in exhibition catalogue, p. 83)

LITERATURE

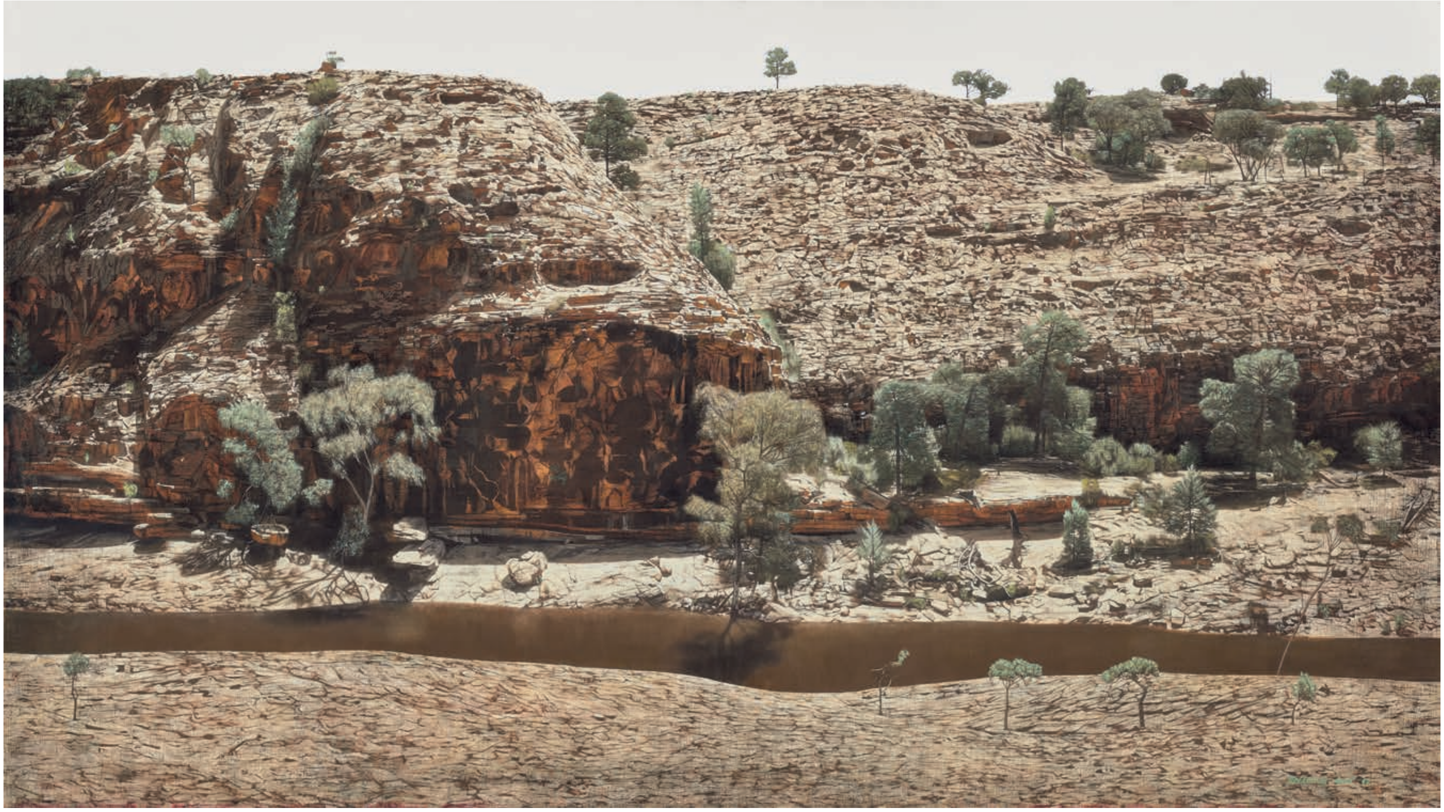
The National Australia Bank Art Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1991, p. 15 (illus.)
Hart, D., *William Delafield Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, pl. 100, pp. 190, 197 (illus.)

'On one level my work might be seen as about some kind of reassuring, comfortable landscape painting – a banal thing… I've never felt that reassured. I've always felt the whole thing of our human existence is very precarious. The landscape is part of our time span here; it asks all the big questions because there is this whole mystery about reality out there and our mortality.'[1]

Hailed the quiet hero of Australian art, William Delafield Cook is one of those rare few artists whose works have entered public and private collections almost as soon as the final brushstroke has dried. Whether immortalising a carefully constructed pyramid of haystacks, the subtle nuances of the intractable Australian bush, or ancient relics in one of Europe's hallowed art museums, undoubtedly fundamental to the widespread appeal of Cook's art has been his unique ability to produce tantalisingly real images of meticulous, near photographic exactitude. Imbued with a haunting air of stillness, his immaculate images betray not only a fascination with the illusory possibilities of paint and mankind's attempt to civilise nature however. More importantly perhaps, they explore the artist's deeply felt awareness of our own mortality – a sense of time as immeasurable against the acute poignancy of our short lives. As he astutely mused, 'I've long seen the world as a series of theatre stages. We players move in and out, but the world endures long beyond us.'[2]

With their glacial proportions and timeless subject matter, Delafield Cook's Australian landscapes such as the magnificent *Mootwingee*, 1990, eloquently capture this concept of time immemorial. For despite their visual immediacy and apparent fidelity, such landscapes nevertheless appear suspended in time – suffused with a sense of calm and tranquillity that, though reassuring in its contemplation of an eternal space, simultaneously evokes a disquieting undercurrent of anxiety and uncertainty through the landscape's ability to expose our limits and the finitude of our existence.[3] The span of a human life pales into insignificance in the face of such an ancient and monumental rock formation; and indeed, as the artist admits, part of his motivation for fastidiously recording a place springs from 'acknowledging your mortality' and 'attempting to leave something behind after you are gone.'[4] Heightening the depiction of reality to such unimaginable degree to reveal the 'essence' of his subjects, thus Delafield Cook highlights the surreal within the real, inviting us to contemplate that which lies beyond our perception – the basic human quest for an underlying universal truth that transcends time or locality.

Both Delafield Cook's affinity for the Australian landscape and his consummate skill in capturing its essential character with an intensity that is unparalleled in Australian art is all the more remarkable when one considers that such paintings – which he created almost exclusively from the late 1970s onwards – were produced entirely from his studio in London. Relocating to London in 1958 after what had been intended as a short trip became a second home, significantly Delafield Cook would nevertheless spend part of every year for the last three decades of his life travelling back to his country of origin to reconnect and undertake long journeys into the landscape '…where his ancestors had settled, where his grandfather had painted, where he had grown up…'[5], before



then returning to his studio abroad to recreate his vision. Paradoxically perhaps, such distance has only enhanced the power of his iconic landscapes, allowing the artist to pursue '…the pure idea of land filtered through memory, in which all voices and activities are silenced, and the spirit of the earth can peacefully emerge'[6]. As he reflects, 'My feeling about the process of removing oneself at intervals from direct contact with the source of one's subject matter is that distancing intensifies the experience of the place, makes it in recollection more vivid. By squirrelling it away, then retrieving it at a later date you can recover it, repossess it, see what it is that should happen to it.'[7]

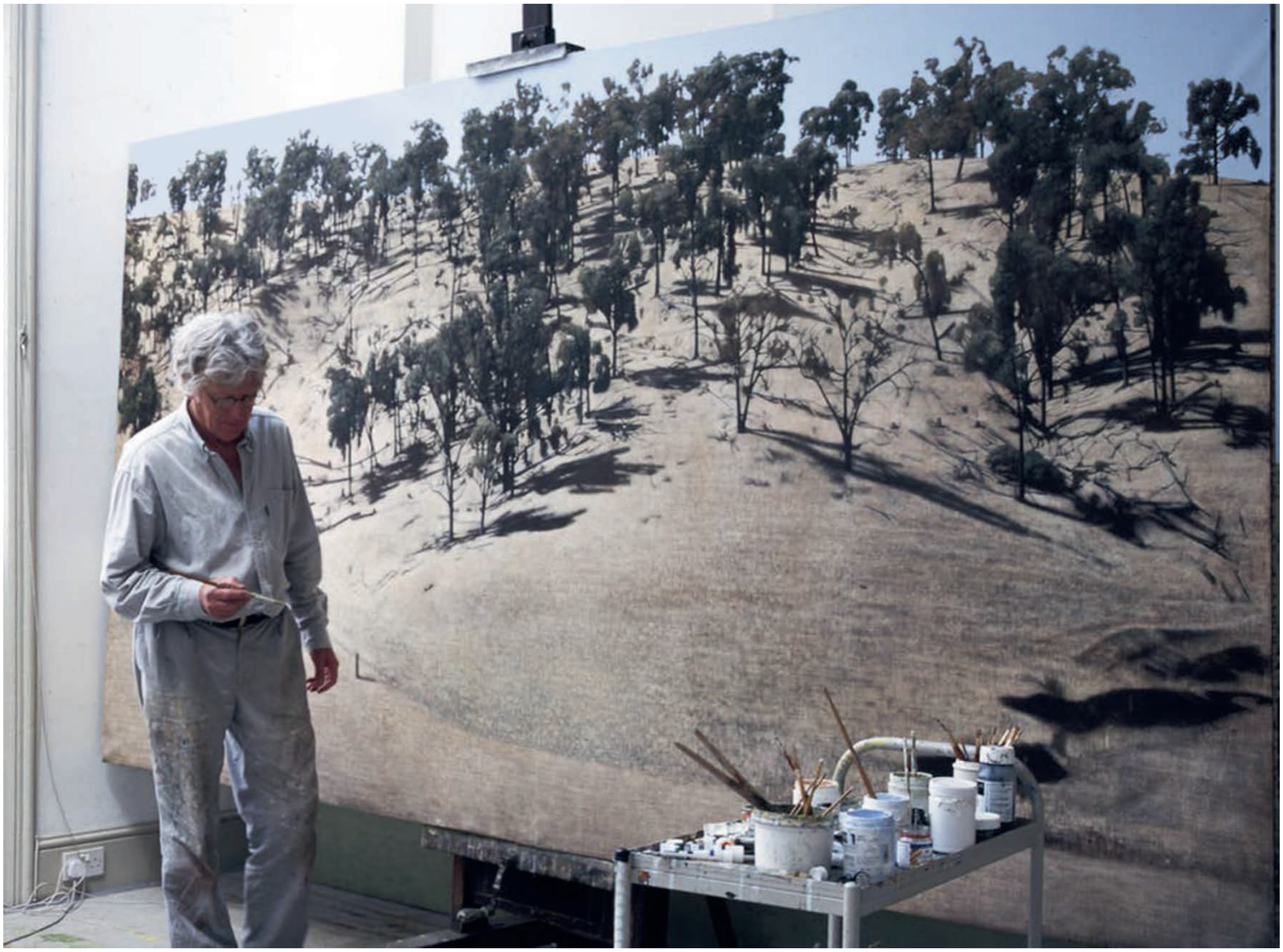
Paying homage to the breathtaking ancient landscape of Mutawintji (or Mootwingee) National Park, 130 kilometres to the north-east of Broken Hill in New South Wales, *Mootwingee* was inspired by the artist's travels in the area after he was invited by the Director of the Broken Hill Art Gallery at the time, Michael Pursche, to present a lecture in November 1986. Derived from the Aboriginal word meaning 'green grass', Mootwingee holds dual significance in both traditional indigenous culture and the history of nineteenth-century white exploration; as elucidated by Alan Moorehead in his moving recount, *Cooper's Creek* (1963): 'Even today it's an extraordinary place, for there is much evidence here of the existence of an inland sea in prehistoric times; marine fossils are found, and the conglomerate rock is filled with pebbles that appear to have been formed by the action of rough waves… For the blacks this was a sacred place. They came here for their circumcision rites and other tribal ceremonies and in the over-hanging caves they made drawings and rock carvings.'[8]

For Delafield Cook, moreover, the site bore particular resonance derived from his interest in the work of Ludwig Becker, an artist and naturalist who had accompanied Burke and Wills on their arduous, ill-fated expedition in search of a mythical inland sea in 1860. As illuminated by the artist – and relayed by art dealer and consultant, Georges Mora, in his letter to then-Chairman of the National Australia Bank, Sir Rupert Clarke, in June 1990 – 'This (Mottwingee [sic.]) interested me as the place where Bourke [sic.] and Wills stopped en route to the centre and where their artist Ludwig Becker did at least two versions of the same subject: one in watercolours, the other, I think, a pen and ink drawing… I made the trip as part of an overall project I had some years ago to re-visit places that artists have been interested in – lots of Von Guerard of course – The Becker things are especially poignant in that he did not survive very long after doing these drawings…'[9] A powerful, mysterious image, *Mootwingee* offers a recreation of this sacred landscape that is so utterly still and elemental, it seems beyond time. Notwithstanding its ostensible neutrality or stark emptiness, the landscape is informed rather by exquisitely rendered incidents – both small and large, including rocks, stone, branches, tracks – while the vast amplitude of the excavated rockface is conveyed through the painting's panoramic scale; as Delafield Cook suggests, '…it brings in this element of having to turn your head to take in the picture which fills the field of vision, like being there.'[10]

Infinite in its detail and infinite in its expanse, *Mootwingee* thus fathoms an Australian 'sublime' that is boundless and majestic in the manner of David Casper Friedrich and the eighteenth-century Romantics Delafield Cook so admired. Inspiring awe and reverence, the classical harmony and stillness of the work implies that the forces of the cosmos have here aligned – that there is a divine order amidst the chaos of nature.[11] Bereft of human presence or any apparent narrative, it is the landscape itself, distilled in its unknowable 'essence', that occupies centre stage, imbued with a sense of drama that leaves the viewer poised indefinitely in a moment of suspense. As Delafield Cook observes of this quality in his art, 'It's the stage that we're living out our lives in… The picture is the set, pregnant with possibilities'.[12]

1. The artist, cited in Hart, D., *William Delafeld Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 203
2. The artist, cited in Field, F., 'William Delafield Cook: Artist hailed as one of Australia's finest whose monumental canvases depicted the rugged landscape of his native land', *The Independent*, London, 13 May 2015
3. Fitzpatrick, A., 'Intimations of Mortality in the Work of William Delafield Cook' in *William Delafield Cook. A Survey*, Gippsland Art Gallery, Sale, 2011, pp.32 – 44, p.39
4. The artist, cited in Hart, op. cit., p. 184
5. Hart, ibid., p. 168
6. Gregg, S., 'William Delafield Cook: A Survey', in *William Delafield Cook. A Survey*, Gippsland Art Gallery, Sale, 2011, pp. 2 – 23, p.5
7. The artist, cited ibid.
8. Moorehead, A., *Cooper's Creek*, Hamish Hamilton, London, 1963, p. 60
9. The artist, cited in Letter from Georges Mora to Sir Rupert Clarke, 20 June 1990, NAB Archives
10. The artist, cited in Hart, op. cit., p. 199
11. Gregg, op. cit., p.9
12. The artist, cited ibid. p.16

VERONICA ANGELATOS



William Delafield Cook in his studio
photographer unknown

WILLIAM DELAFIELD COOK

15

(1936 – 2015)
A FRENCH CLIFF, 1979
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
86.5 x 305.0 cm
signed and dated verso: W. Delafield Cook / London 1979
dated and inscribed with title on label attached verso:
A French / Cliff / 1978 – 9

ESTIMATE: $150,000 – 200,000

PROVENANCE

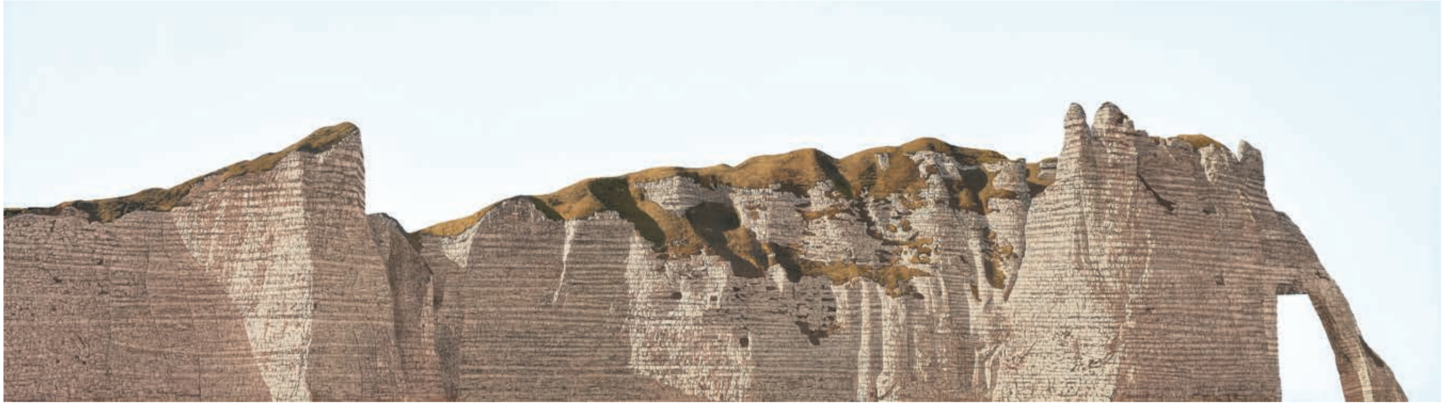
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in October 1980 (label attached verso)

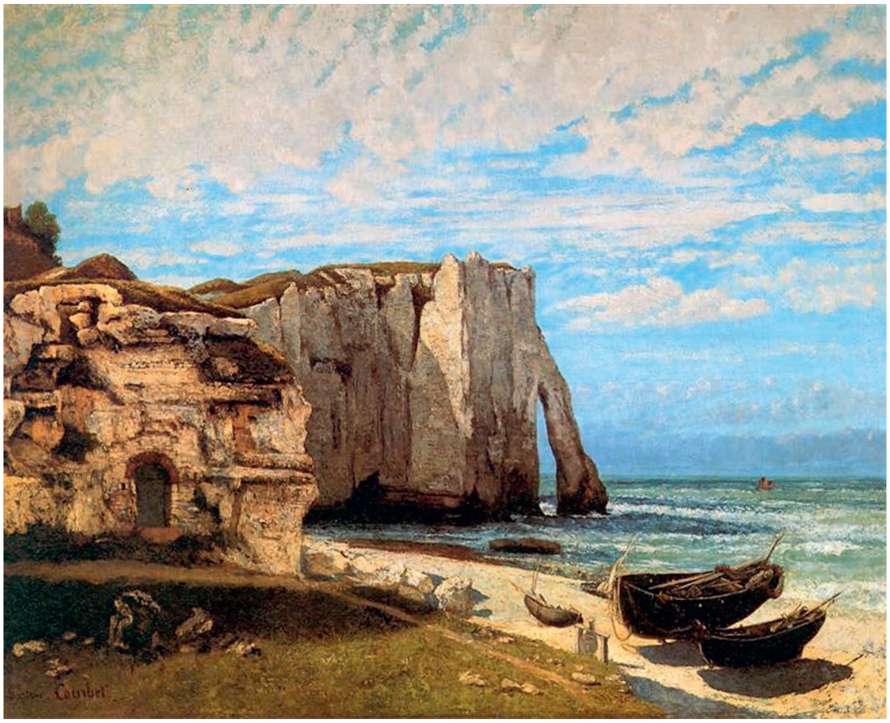
EXHIBITED

William Delafield Cook: New Paintings, Redfern Gallery, London, 2 – 31 October 1979
William Delafield Cook: Mid – career survey, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 4 June – 19 July 1987, cat. 14 (label attached verso)
William Delafield Cook, Selected Works 1958 – 1987, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 4 November – 6 December 1987, cat. 24

LITERATURE

Perram, R., *William Delafield Cook: Selected Works 1958 – 1987*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, p. 17
Hart, D., *William Delafield Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, pl. 69, pp. 148, 149 (illus.), 152, 160, 191, 211, 233





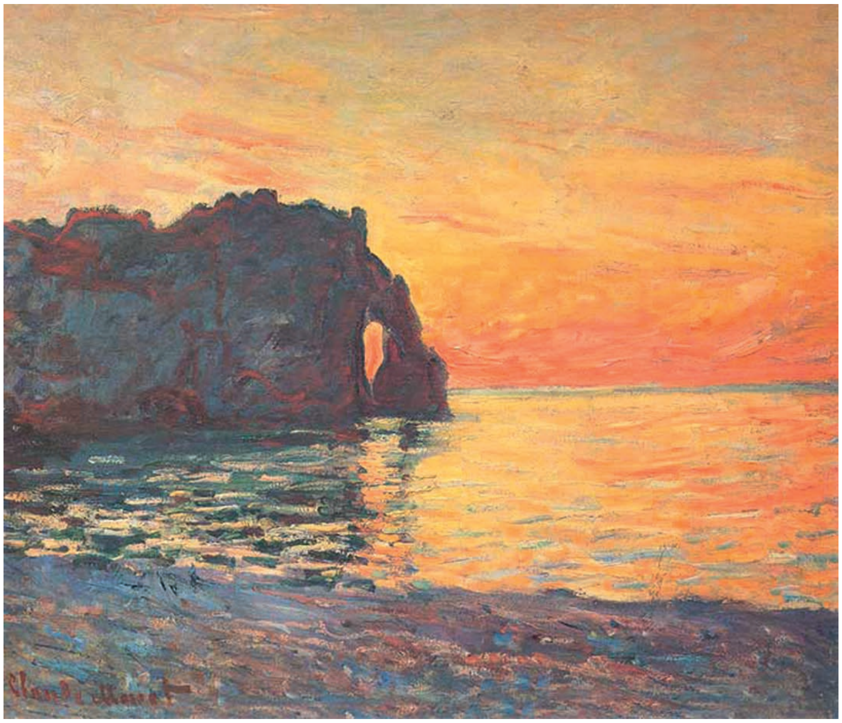
Gustave Courbet
The Cliffs at Étretat, 1869
oil on canvas
93.0 x 114.0 cm
Von der Heydt Museum, Wuppertal, Germany

'By giving what is commonplace an exalted meaning, what is ordinary a mysterious aspect, what is familiar the impressiveness of the unfamiliar, to the finite the appearance of infinity...'[1]

The antithesis of the Impressionist who seeks to capture the transient, fleeting effects of light, and utterly unlike the Expressionist who filters observations through his or her own – usually tortured – subjectivity, William Delafield Cook aspires rather to an art that is timeless, objective and monumental. Paying homage to the past – from classical painting and architecture to Romantics such as Casper David Friedrich and Surrealists including de Chirico and Magritte – his works speak at once of quietude and magnitude, amplifying small, barely detectable sensations to the level of grand history painting. Thus transcending the descriptive to offer something more metaphysical and speculative, Cook's compositions capture not so much instances of time, but time immemorial, exploring eternal problems and experiences that pervade all humanity.

In a manner akin to the previous lot which was inspired by Delafield Cook's preoccupation with particular places and motifs employed by his artistic predecessors, so too *A French Cliff*, 1978 – 79 finds its origins in the annals of art history – and specifically, the oeuvre of Monet. Indeed, while still teaching at Maidstone Art School, Delafield Cook had presented a series of lectures that elaborated upon his interest in both this artist and the theme of 'retracing the past': '…I love the idea of doing it. I went to Rouen looking for the cathedral where Monet had worked. I did the same thing in London where I went to every spot I could find where he had painted around the Thames, Houses of Parliament, and Big Ben… You can actually stand in the same places where he stood. I went back over some weeks. I marked the spot on the ground so that I could put the tripod in exactly the same place. At different times of the day, I would take a photograph picking up on what Monet was trying to do – to reflect the shifting light and atmosphere. The trouble was that the air and light in London were so different from when Monet was doing it; so it wasn't the same… It was partly about just wanting to see whether he was trying to be truthful to what was actually happening. Of course, I never found anything remotely resembling a Monet painting.'[2]

While Delafield Cook's ongoing references to the work of Monet may seem incongruous given his vastly different approach to painting, it was, rather, the Impressionist's subjects that interested him, affording the catalyst or springboard from which he would pursue his own pictorial investigations. Earlier in the decade, he had experimented with the idea of adopting a particular motif in his *Waterlilies*, 1972 – 73 (Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney), and now in 1978, he visited



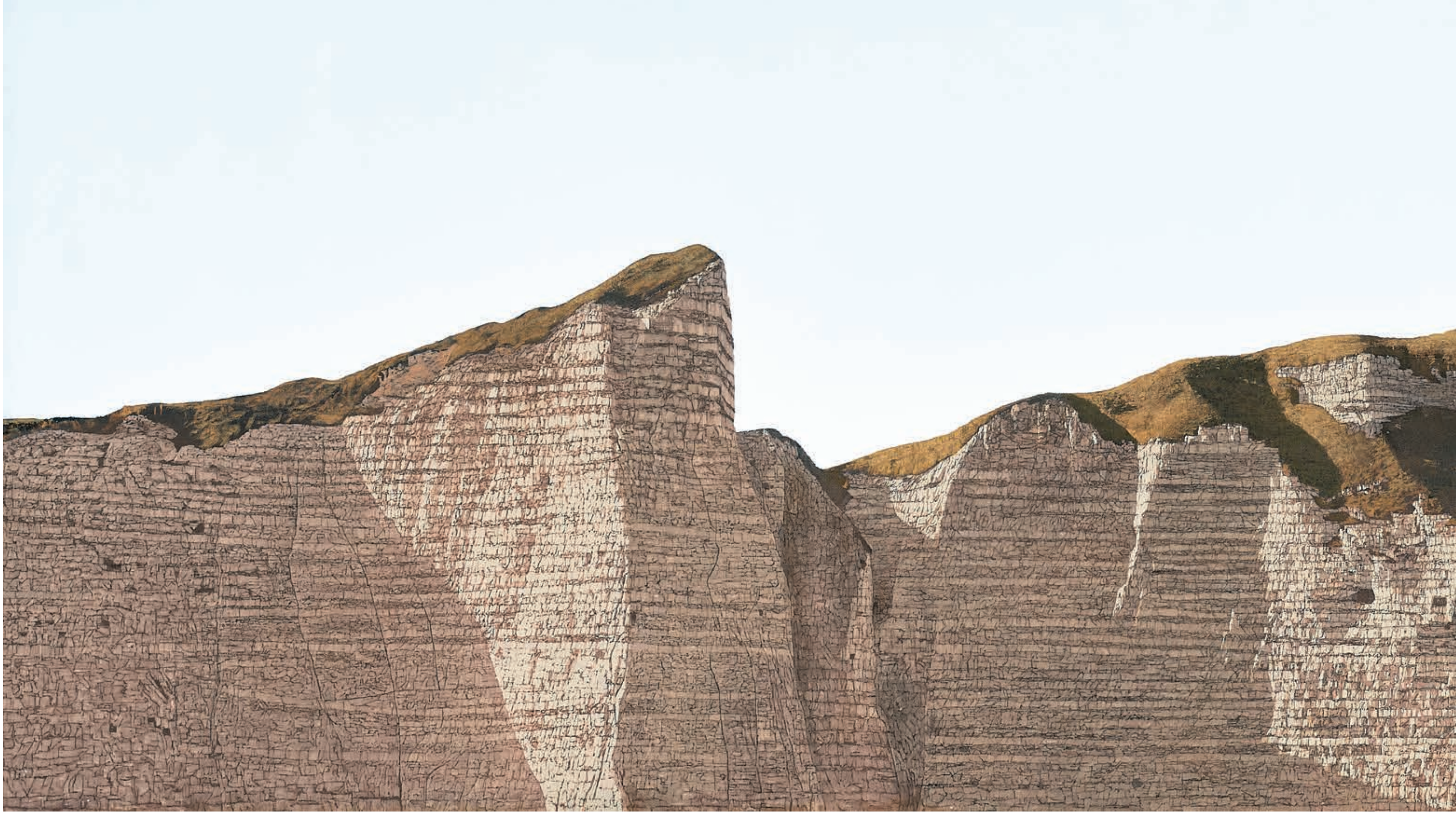
Claude Monet
Étretat, Cliff Of d'Aval, Sunset, 1885
oil on canvas
Private collection

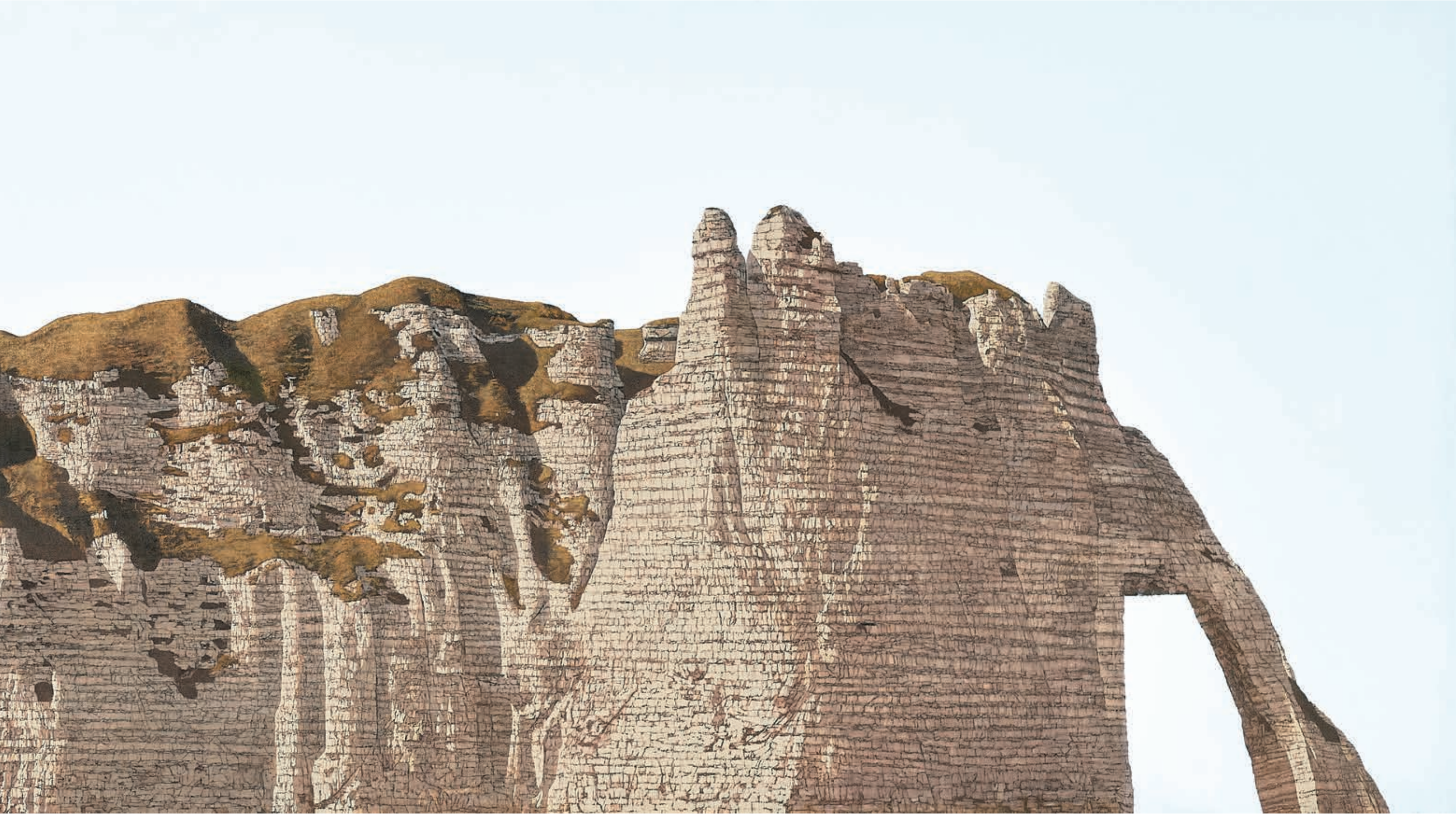
a place that had been a great source of inspiration to Monet – the cliffs at Étretat in Normandy on the north coast of France.[3] From Delacroix to Courbet, Monet and Matisse, generations of artists had been attracted to this location by 'the beauty of its light and its famous chalk cliffs which the sea had worn away to form three arches and a solitary 'needle''.[4] Incorporating the same distinctive curved arch of the rockface that punctuates the interpretations of Monet and Courbet, *A French Cliff* nevertheless departs markedly from any artistic precedents – not simply in its obvious technical differences, but more importantly perhaps, in the antipodean's choice of emphasis. Where previous artists had explored the connections between the rocks and ocean, Delafield Cook here focuses instead upon a broader expanse of the cliff face extracted from its surroundings – concentrating on the undulating contours capped by patches of grass, the minute horizontal geological situations, and the striking, raking light and shadow.[5] With its long narrow horizontal format accentuating the expansive nature of his depiction, the composition offers an intensely vivid evocation of surface and substance that transforms the seemingly familiar into the extraordinary – inviting the viewer to contemplate the visible until we are drawn intuitively to that which lies beyond the physical realm.

A technically demanding work executed over several months upon the artist's return to his studio at Nettlecombe in Somerset, England, indeed *A French Cliff* encapsulates an impressive example of Delafield Cook's deeply considered, scrupulously re-created painting where, as Ann Galbally suggests, 'reality [is] twice-interpreted, twice filtered, twice heightened' to generate a peculiar stillness, intensity and sense of isolation.[6] As Delafield Cook himself reflected upon the agenda for his art in 1975: '…to isolate fragments of reality and to present them reduced to their essence, seeking an image which will endure and which will carry with it some of the strangeness and intensity which I myself have felt when experiencing them in nature. The subjects are not in themselves important and are selected simply as a means of conveying a view of the physical world that transcends the obvious, the particular and leads towards the metaphysical.'[7]

1. Quote from Novalis, *Poeticism* (1798) inscribed in one of Cook's notebooks; see Hart, D., *William Delafield Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 220
2. The artist cited in Hart, D., Hart, D., *William Delafeld Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 148
3. Hart, ibid.
4. Spate, V., *The Colour of Time: Claude Monet*, Thames and Hudson, London, 1992, p. 157
5. Hart, op. cit.
6. Galbally, A., 'William Delafield Cook', *Art International*, Spring 1977, p. 33
7. The artist in a letter to Dr Bernd Krimmel, Darmstadt, Germany, 7 April 1975, reproduced in Hart, op. cit., p. 88

VERONICA ANGELATOS





WILLIAM DELAFIELD COOK
(1936 – 2015)
A FRENCH CLIFF, 1979

ARTHUR STREETON

16

(1867 – 1943)
BLUE VISTA FROM THE SUNDIAL, 1920
oil on canvas
64.0 x 102.5 cm
signed lower left: A STREETON.

ESTIMATE: $300,000 – 500,000

PROVENANCE

Mr. Arthur Norman, Melbourne, acquired directly from the artist by 1935 (label attached verso)
Private collection
Joseph Brown Gallery, Melbourne
Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Collection, acquired from the above
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in August 1998 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

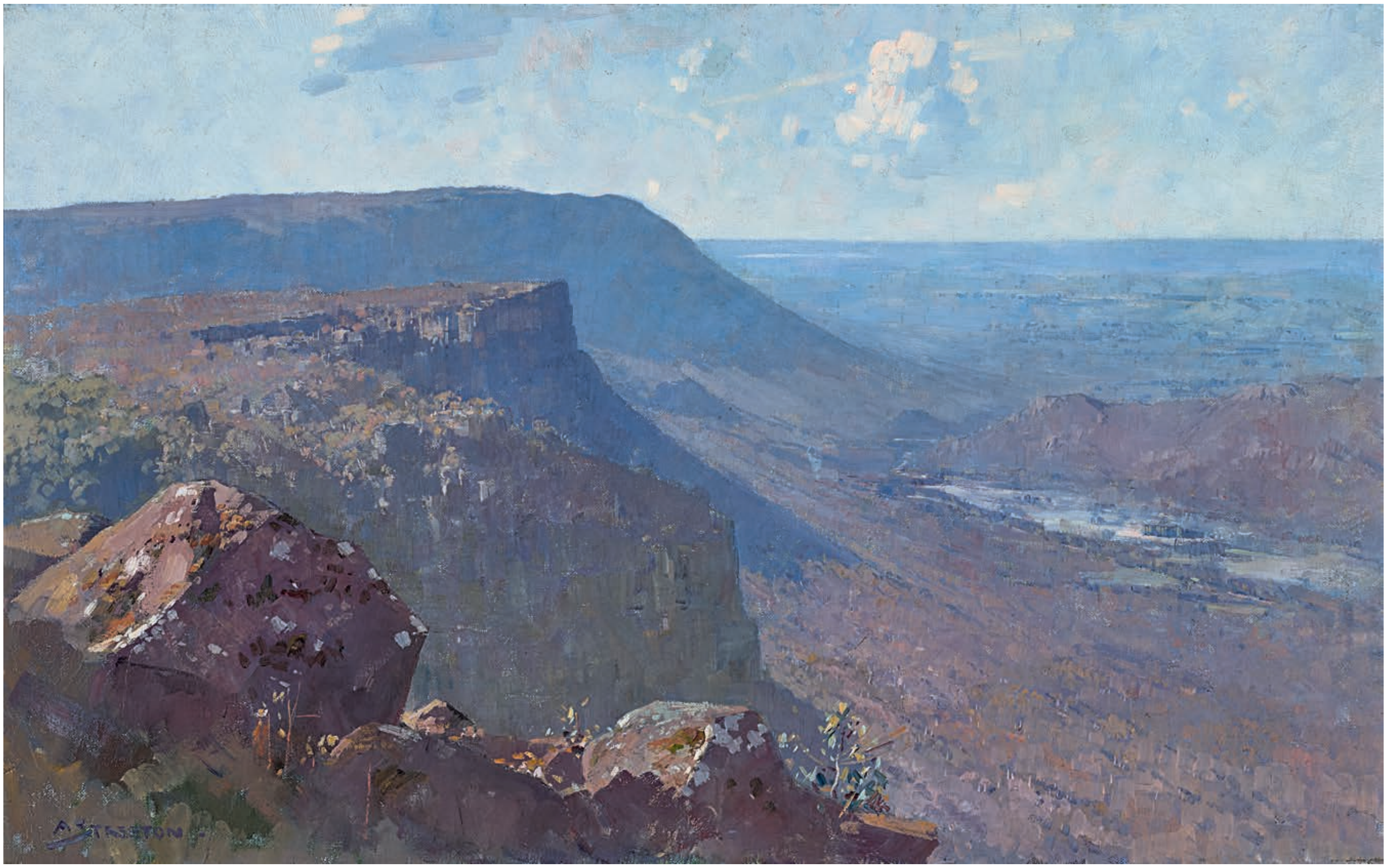
Mr Streeton's exhibition of paintings of the Grampian Mountains, Athenaeum Hall, Melbourne, 1 – 6 November 1920, cat. 1 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')
Recent Australian Landscape by Arthur Streeton, Education Department, Sydney, 21 – 28 November 1921 (as 'Sundial View, Grampians')
Loan Exhibition of works by Arthur Streeton, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 20 November 1931 – 20 January 1932
Land of the Golden Fleece – Arthur Streeton in the Western District, Geelong Gallery, Victoria, 20 February – 15 June 2016, cat. 1 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')
Streeton – Australia Felix, a Grampians Selection, Hamilton Regional Art Gallery, Victoria, 15 July – 25 September 2016 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')
Streeton, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 7 November 2020 – 14 February 2021 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')

LITERATURE

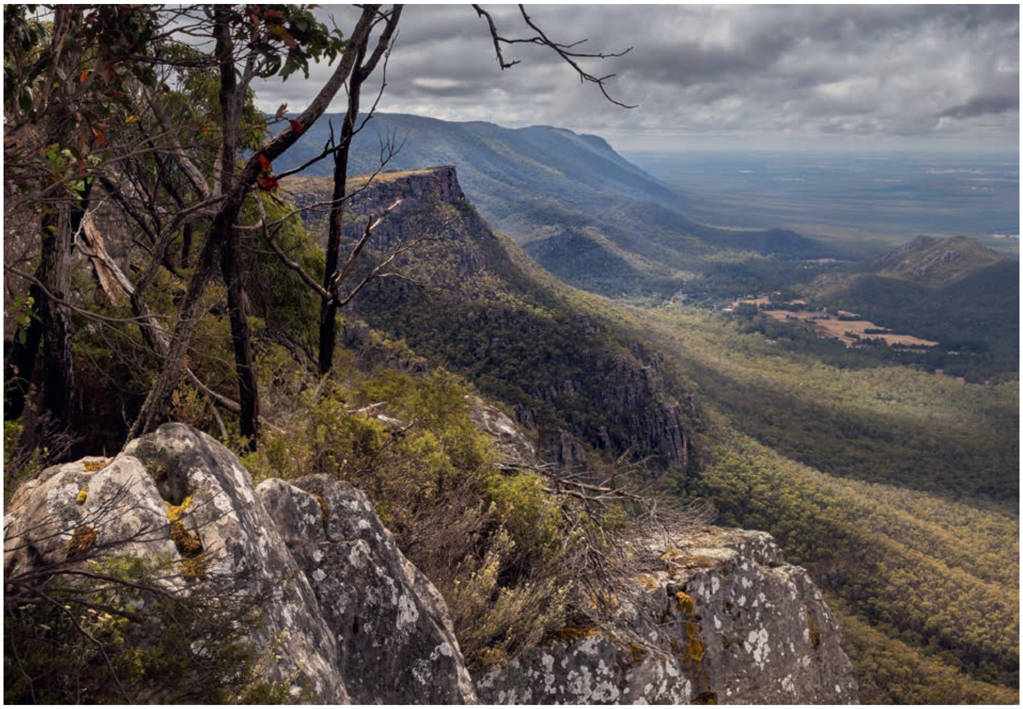
'Art Notes: Mr. Arthur Streeton Among The Grampians', *The Age*, Melbourne, 2 November 1920, p. 8
'Mr Streeton's Pictures', *The Argus*, Melbourne, 2 November 1920, p. 9 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')
'Melbourne Art', *The Australasian*, Melbourne, 13 November 1920, p. 49 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')
'Arthur Streeton: A Farewell Exhibition', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 22 November 1921, p. 11 (as 'Sundial View, Grampians')
'Streeton Landscapes. Some Sydney Scenes', *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 22 November 1921, p. 9 (as 'Sundial View, Grampians')
'The Palette', *The Bulletin*, Sydney, vol. 52, no. 2703, 2 December 1931, p. 18 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')
Streeton, A., *The Arthur Streeton Catalogue*, Melbourne, 1935, cat. 742 (as 'The Sundial View', dated as 1921)
Edwards, G., Smith, G., and Sullivan L., *Land of the Golden Fleece – Arthur Streeton in the Western District,* Geelong Gallery, Victoria, 2016, pp. 29 (illus.), 54 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')
Tunnicliffe, W., *Streeton*, Art Gallery of New South Wales and Thames & Hudson, Sydney, 2020, pp. 271 (illus.), 372 (as 'Blue Vista from the Sundial')

RELATED WORKS

View up the valley, 1920, oil on canvas, 55.0 x 76.5 cm, in the collection of the Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria
Monta Rosea (or 'Mount Rosea, Grampians'), 1920, oil on canvas, 63.5 x 76.0 cm, private collection, Sydney
Hall's Gap (or 'Hall's Gap, the Grampians'), 1920, oil on canvas, 64.0 x 78.0 cm, in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra



A. STREETON

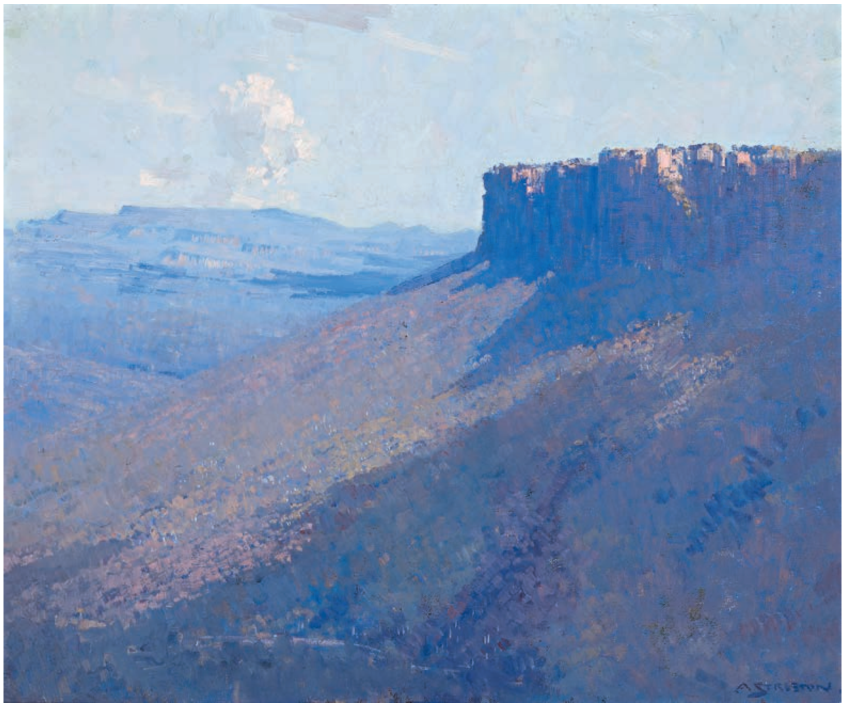


John Gollings
Blue vista from the sundial, 2016
archival inkjet print on Baryta paper
64.0 x 102.7 cm
Commissioned by Geelong Gallery, Victoria, 2016
Courtesy of the artist

Arthur Streeton is a master of the heroic Australian landscape. Impressive paintings include '*The purple noon's transparent might'*, 1896, *Australia Felix*, 1907 and *Land of the Golden Fleece*, 1926, all in major collections.[1] *Blue Vista from the Sundial*, 1920 has a place among these national icons, confirmed by the enthusiastic reception of Streeton's contemporaries to this day. Featured in Streeton's solo exhibition of 'Grampians Mountains' paintings at the Athenaeum Hall during the Melbourne Cup Week of 1920, *The Age* newspaper described them as '…more poetical and more romantic than anything that Mr. Streeton has previously done.' Noting 'What Streeton has added to his wonderful technique is a warmer note of sentiment', the reviewer continued, remarking that: '…in such beautiful work as the *Blue Vista*, the *View Up the Valley, Hall's Gap* and the *Hills of Sassafras*, it is the factor that turns the picture into a sensation.' The show was hailed as '…an important event in Australian art. [Marking] the return to his position of pre-eminence of our greatest landscape painter.'[2]

Blue Vista from the Sundial, 1920 continued to impress in Sydney when shown there the following year. Its presence in Streeton's November exhibition at the Education Department Gallery was described by *The Sydney Morning Herald* as 'serenely majestic in the expression of solitude and of space.'[3] And *The Daily Telegraph* enthused: 'Perhaps his most complete picture is "Sundial view, Grampians," a unified impression in which every stage of the composition, from foreground to sky, is carried out with a rare appreciation for aerial perspective. It is a big landscape, painted in a big way.'[4] Some years later, in 1931 when the National Art Gallery of New South Wales presented its *Loan Exhibition of Works by Arthur Streeton*, *The Bulletin* commented in its own inimitable way:

'And when, as in "Blue Vista from the Sundial," you not only get the panorama of vast valleys very nearly as God made it, but feel that if you stretched out your hand you would feel the woolly lichen on the nearest rock, you can't reasonably ask much more of a painter.'[5]



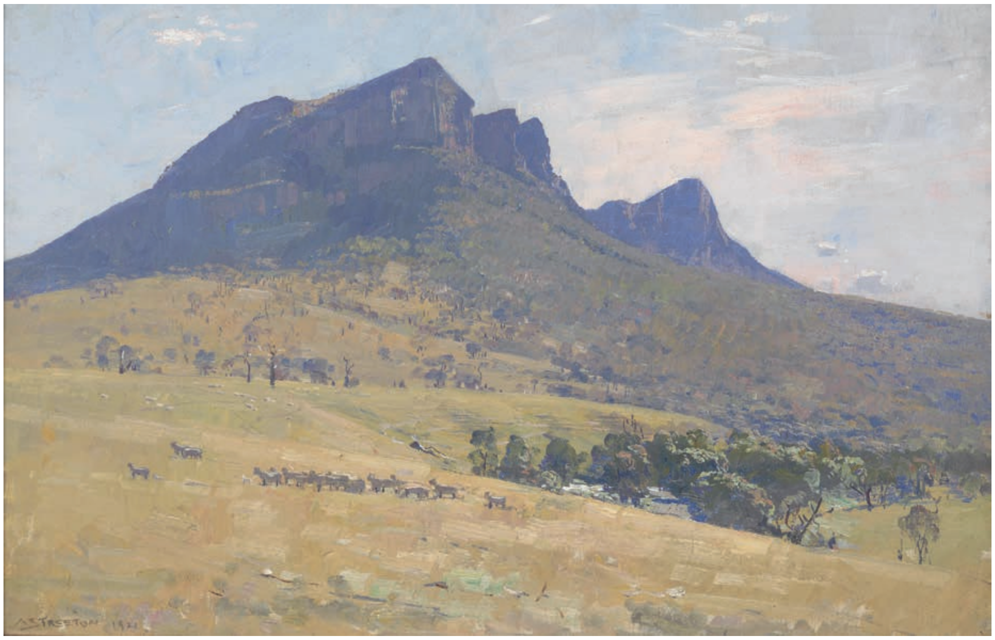
Arthur Streeton
Mount Rosea, Grampians, 1920
oil on canvas
63.5 x 76.0 cm
Private collection

In more recent times, *Blue Vista from the Sundial*, 1920 has returned to centre stage - in Geelong and Sydney. It was catalogue number one in the Geelong Gallery's 2016 exhibition, *Land of the Golden Fleece - Arthur Streeton in the Western District*. Neighbouring paintings included *Bush Under the Peaks*, 1920, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; *Hall's Gap*, 1920, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra; *View up the Valley*, 1920, Geelong Gallery, Victoria; and *Mount Rosea*, 1920, which was sold by Deutscher and Hackett in August 2013. When, last year, the Art Gallery of New South Wales presented the major exhibition, *Streeton*, the accompanying catalogue of the same name featured *Blue Vista from the Sundial*, 1920 as a double-page colour spread, lavish in detail.[6] Illustrating the introduction to the chapter 'The Big Picture: National Landscapes', Wayne Tunnicliffe wrote, in part, about the painting:

> The blue of the title refers to the atmospheric effect of eucalypt oil particles interacting with light and giving the distinctive blue haze that appears over the Australian bush on sunny days. It is also the colour that becomes most closely associated with Streeton.[7]

The eye-catching closeness of the foreground rock formations, made up of animated strokes of the brush, enhances identification. In turn, their sharp focus and outline emphasise the precipitous drop, providing an effectively dramatic introduction to the scene, awe-inspiring in imagery as in technique. Rugged escarpments compete with vastness, the ancient land mass metamorphosed by the poetic play of sunlight and shadow, enveloped in the subtlest of blues.

The absence of any figure in *Blue Vista from the Sundial*, 1920 and other early landscapes of the Grampians give them a distinct individuality. No intermediary is required. Any imagined absence is more than filled by the presence of nature, passionately felt and shared. The close-up foreground provides a breath of intimacy, contrasted with the awe-inspiring panorama and reverence for grandeur. It recalls that admiration of the sublime in nature, which characterised those noble landscapes of Eugène von Guérard and his late colonial contemporaries.



Arthur Streeton
The Grampians (Mount Abrupt), 1921
oil on canvas
51.6 × 76.7 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

After many years in England, serving in the Great War at the Third London General Hospital, Wandsworth and later as an Australian Official War Artist, Streeton visited Australia with his wife Nora and their son Oliver in 1920. Arriving Melbourne on 2 February, he sought to enhance his Australian reputation and find peace and inspiration in the landscape of his homeland. Success was meteoric, especially for his Grampians paintings which he considered, as he later wrote to Sydney Ure Smith, '…the best that I painted when last in Australia'.[8] He first visited the Grampians in September 1920, staying at Harold Armytage's homestead near Dunkeld, at the southern end of the scenic mountain chain. Peace, freedom and the sparkle of early spring fills canvas after canvas, especially *Blue Vista from the Sundial*, 1920, the largest work in the Melbourne exhibition in November. Streeton, himself, reflected:

When painting among the Grampians Hills, I found that my best subjects were visible from the crest of the Peaks: it took a hour's steady climbing laden with canvas colours easel palette lunch & billy of water … pausing halfway for a breath & looking up at the dizzy heights … But once perched upon the Sundial Peak, above the world, the reward is evident in a vast expanse of pale blue over myriad gums rising to Mount Rosea, or over Boronia Peak to Stawell 20 miles to the East.[9]

Filled with the promise of spring's renewal, *Blue Vista from the Sundial*, 1920 is a bravura celebration of the Australian landscape – an image of national optimism. His love affair with the countryside continued when, in 1921, Streeton bought five acres of land at Olinda in the Dandenong Ranges near Melbourne, where he would return a few years later to build 'Longacres', to live and to paint.

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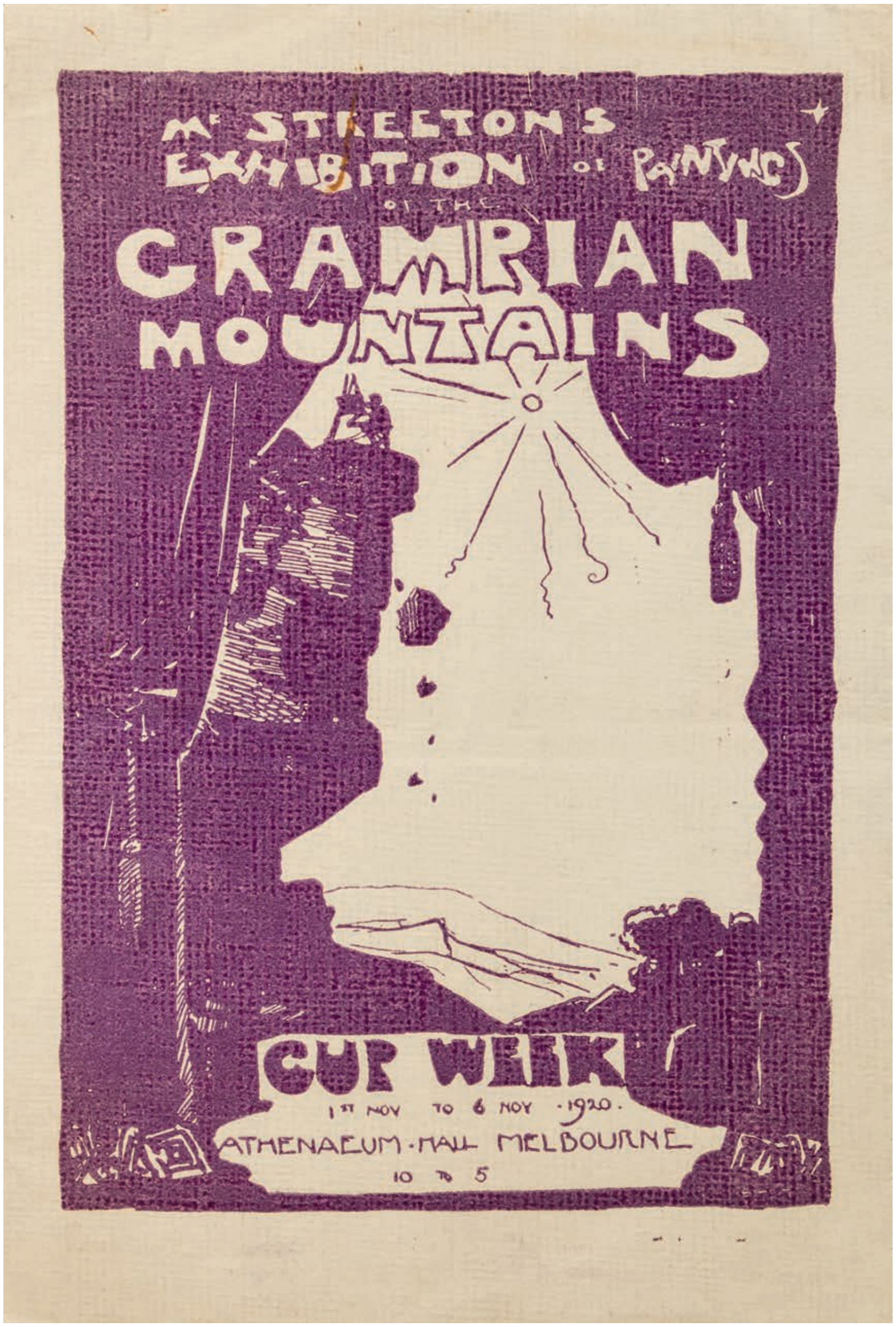
1. '*The purple noon's transparent might*', 1896 is in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; *Australia Felix*, 1907 in the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide; and *Land of the Golden Fleece*, 1926, in the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra. Streeton painted three versions of *Land of the Golden Fleece*, 1926. The other two are in the collections of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne and, the largest, in the Australian Club, Sydney.
2. 'Art Notes: Mr. Arthur Streeton Among The Grampians', *The Age*, 2 November 1920, p. 8
3. 'Arthur Streeton. A Farewell Exhibition', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 22 November 1921, p. 11
4. 'Streeton Landscapes', *Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 22 November 1921, p. 9
5. 'The Palette', *The Bulletin*, Sydney, 2 December 1931, vol. 52, no. 2703, p. 18
6. Tunnicliffe, W. (ed.), *Streeton*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney and Thames & Hudson Australia, Melbourne, 2020, pp. 252 – 53
7. Ibid., p. 257
8. Streeton letter to Sydney Ure Smith, 16 June 1922, Sydney Ure Smith Papers, MS 31/3, Mitchell Library, SLNSW, quoted in Mary Eagle, *The Oil Paintings of Arthur Streeton in the National Gallery of Australia*, Canberra, 1994, p. 159
9. Arthur Streeton, *Notes for Memoirs*, Streeton Family papers, quoted in Eagle, ibid., p. 159

DAVID THOMAS


Mr STREETONS
EXHIBITION of PAINTINGS
of THE
GRAMPIAN
MOUNTAINS
CUP WEEK
1ST NOV TO 6 NOV ·1920·
ATHENAEUM·HALL MELBOURNE
10 TO 5

Mr Streeton's exhibition of paintings of the Grampian Mountains,
Athenaeum Hall, Melbourne, exhibition catalogue cover, 1920
Douglas Stewart Fine Books, Melbourne

FREDERICK McCUBBIN

17

(1855 – 1917)
WILLIAMSTOWN LANDSCAPE, 1909
oil on canvas
61.0 x 91.5 cm
signed and dated lower left: F McCubbin / 1909

ESTIMATE: $400,000 – 600,000

PROVENANCE

The artist, until 1917
Thence by descent
Louis McCubbin, Melbourne
National Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, acquired from the above in 1952
Company collection, Sydney, acquired from the above in 1993
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1995 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

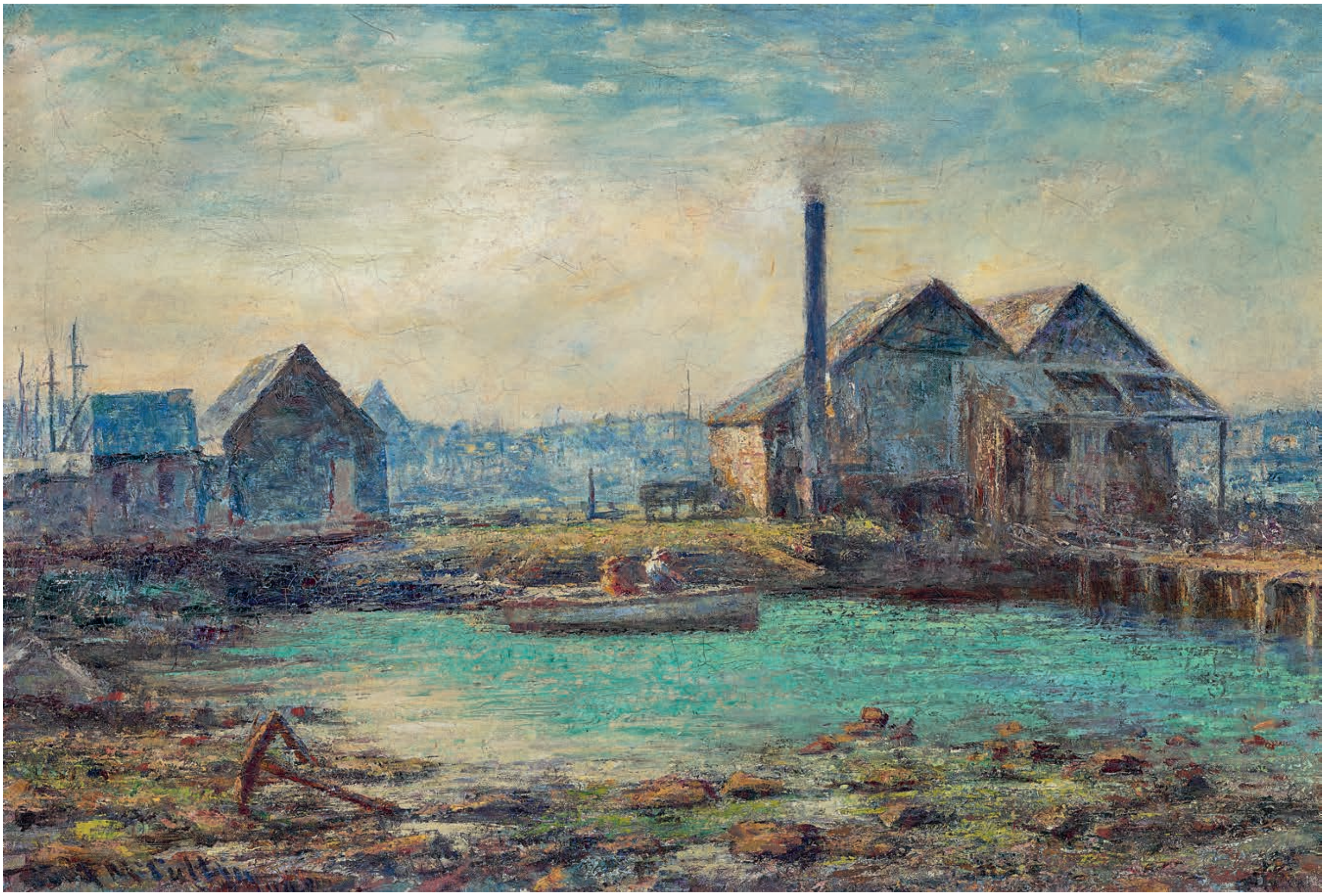
Frederick McCubbin Exhibition to Mark the Centenary of the Artist's Birth in 1855, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 4 November – 31 December 1955, cat. 29, and touring to Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, January – February 1956, and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, March 1956
Making Melbourne: Marvellous Melbourne – Industrial City, Gold Treasury Museum, Melbourne, 5 June – 5 December 2003 (as 'Williamstown')

LITERATURE

Francis, I., 'On Exhibition at Gallery', *The News*, Adelaide, 22 October 1952, p. 2 (illus.)
'Recent Purchases', *The Advertiser*, Adelaide, 22 October 1952, p. 2
George, E., 'SA Purchases', *The Mail*, Adelaide, 1 November 1952, p. 42
'"Williamstown Landscape", by Frederick McCubbin (1855–1917)', *Quarterly Bulletin*, National Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, vol. 14, no. 2, October 1952, p. 4 (illus.)
Hoff, U., *Frederick McCubbin Exhibition to Mark the Centenary of the Artist's Birth in 1855*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1955, cat. 29 (illus.)
Hoff, U., 'The Phases of McCubbin's Art', *Meanjin*, Melbourne, vol. 15, no. 3, September 1956, p. 305
Galbally, A., *Frederick McCubbin*, Hutchinson, Melbourne, 1981, pl. 36, pp. 135, 136 (illus.), 150, 151
Mackenzie, A., *Frederick McCubbin 1855 – 1917: 'The Proff' and his art*, Mannagum Press, Melbourne, 1990, p. 204
Whitelaw, B., *The Art of Frederick McCubbin*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1991, p. 120
Ingram, T., 'Moving The Masterpieces', *Australian Financial Review*, Sydney, 10 March 1994
Dodgshun, B., 'On loan: Williamstown, 1909 by Frederick McCubbin', *Treasured Moments: Newsletter for Staff at the Gold Treasury Museum*, Melbourne, 2005

RELATED WORKS

Study for Williamstown Landscape, c.1909, oil on canvas board, 24.0 x 34.0 cm, private collection
Williamstown, 1909, oil on canvas, 33.0 x 48.0 cm, private collection
Wharves at Williamstown, c.1909, whereabouts unknown, illus., in *Melba's Gift Book of Australian Art and Literature*, George Robertson & Co. Pty. Ltd., Melbourne, c.1915, p. 144



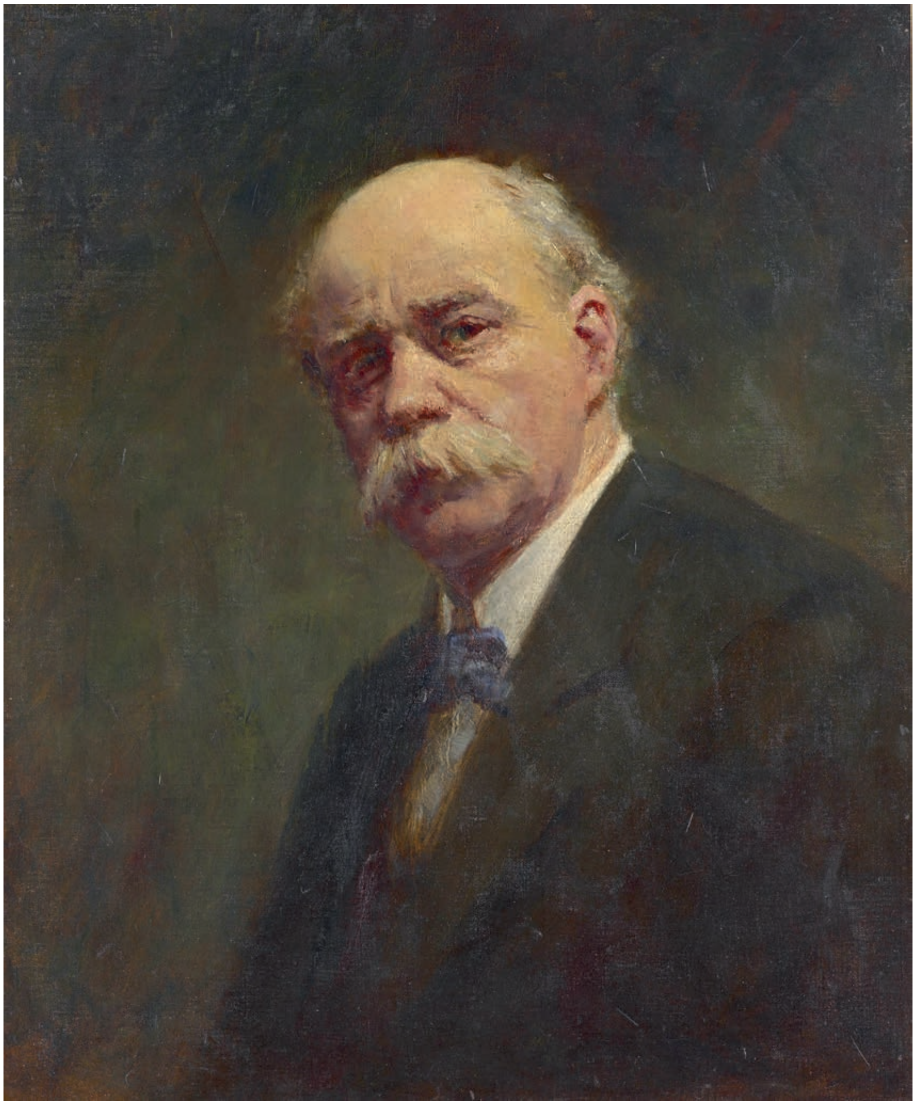
The sparkling waters of Melbourne's bayside suburb Williamstown were for Frederick McCubbin like those of Sydney and its harbour for Arthur Streeton. His enthusiasm can still be felt today in the lively seascapes and letter of the summer of 1909 to his old friend Tom Roberts: I have been down at Williamstown for a few poschards [rough sketches], my dear boy just like Venice, lovely colour. Water and sky and an old ship… the older I get the wider my interest grows in all life, colour, charm.[1]

Born in King Street, not far from the Melbourne docks, McCubbin's interest in ships and docklands began early. It continued when, as a teenager, he drove one of his father's bread carts 'through North Melbourne down to the boats at the wharves'.[2] *View of the New Dock*, 1880 (private collection) is one of his earliest oil paintings. Others followed – *The City's Toil*, 1887 of Smith's Wharf Yarra Yarra (Wesfarmers Collection) and *Melbourne 1888*, 1888 (National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne). The Williamstown series, however, had its more immediate genesis in the oil sketches painted during McCubbin's 1907 trip to England – of sunlit waters in *The Blue Mediterranean*, c.1907 (formerly in the collection of the late Professor Bernard Smith, Melbourne); *Mount Vesuvius, Naples*, c.1907 (Deutscher and Hackett, Melbourne, 26 August 2009, lot 50); and busy shipping scenes on the River Thames, as in *The Pool of London*, 1907 (National Gallery of Victoria).

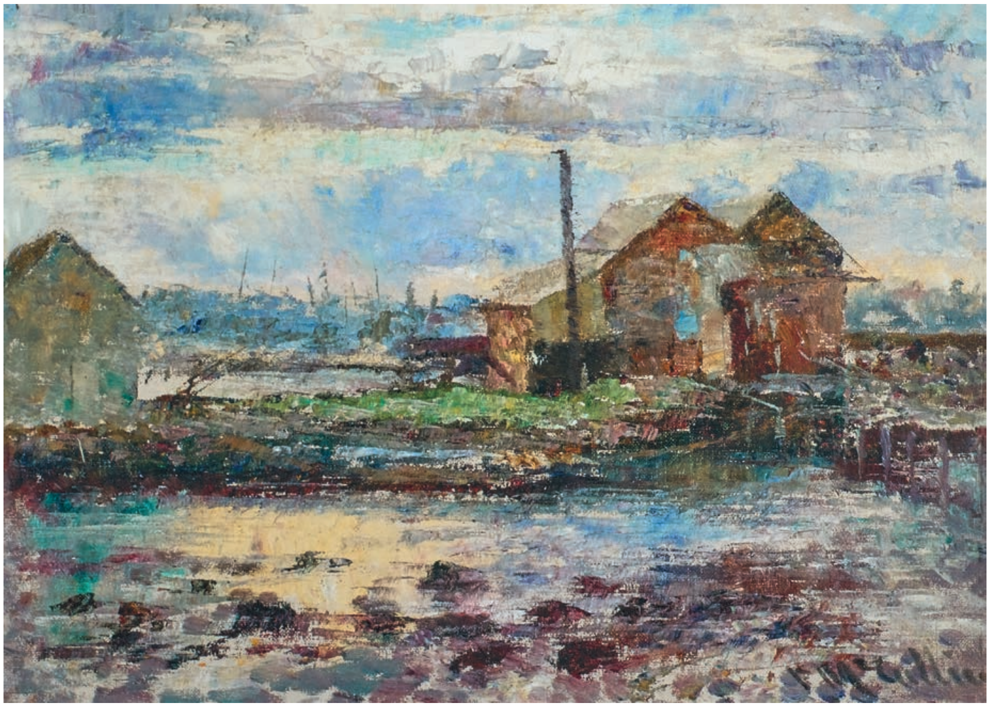
Of the many colourful works McCubbin painted at Williamstown in that summer of 1909, *Williamstown Landscape*, 1909 is one of the finest. A favourite spot, he painted four versions – *Sketch for 'Williamstown Landscape'*; *Williamstown*; *Wharves at Williamstown*; and *Williamstown Landscape*, detailed above. Working out of doors, McCubbin made small, atmospheric sketches in oil (usually 25 x 35 centimetres), translating select ones onto larger canvases in the studio, as in our painting. Introduced by *Study for 'Williamstown Landscape'*, c.1909, its bright colours are deftly handled with broad brush and palette knife. Next, *Williamstown*, 1909, purchased from the artist by Lawrence Abrahams, is larger in size and painted on canvas. It and *Wharves at Williamstown* (illustrated in *Melba's Gift Book*) are closest to the painting on offer.

Although again larger, *Williamstown Landscape*, 1909 remains medium of size, retaining the empathy of the smaller work. The humanising feeling continues through the centrally placed two figures in the boat. (The figures were probably introduced from another sketch, *Figure Group, Williamstown*, c. 1909, the background buildings in the sketch being similar to those of *Williamstown Landscape*, 1909.3) Key placement of figures, particularly children, in the landscape is characteristic McCubbin, seen in such masterly paintings as *Lost*, 1886 (National Gallery of Victoria) and throughout his oeuvre. In *Williamstown Landscape*, 1909 the narratives of the early years give way to the bravura handling of colour and light of his later style – the red shirt of one, and the sunlight striking the white hat and shirt of the other. And all is enveloped in a luminous atmosphere, almost aqueous. Blue skies and waters predominate throughout these paintings. One is even acknowledged with the title *Harmony in Blue, Williamstown*, 1909 (formerly George Page Cooper collection, Melbourne).

Significantly, when the National Gallery of Victoria held its McCubbin centenary exhibition in 1955, *Williamstown Landscape*, 1909 and *Williamstown*, 1909, the study from the Abrahams' collection,
were the only two selected to represent the series. Our painting also had the distinction of being one of the few illustrated in the catalogue.[4]



Frederick McCubbin
Self portrait, c.1913
oil on canvas on composition board
61.0 x 51.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



Frederick McCubbin
Study for Williamstown Landscape, 1909
oil on canvas on board
25.5 x 35.5 cm
Private collection

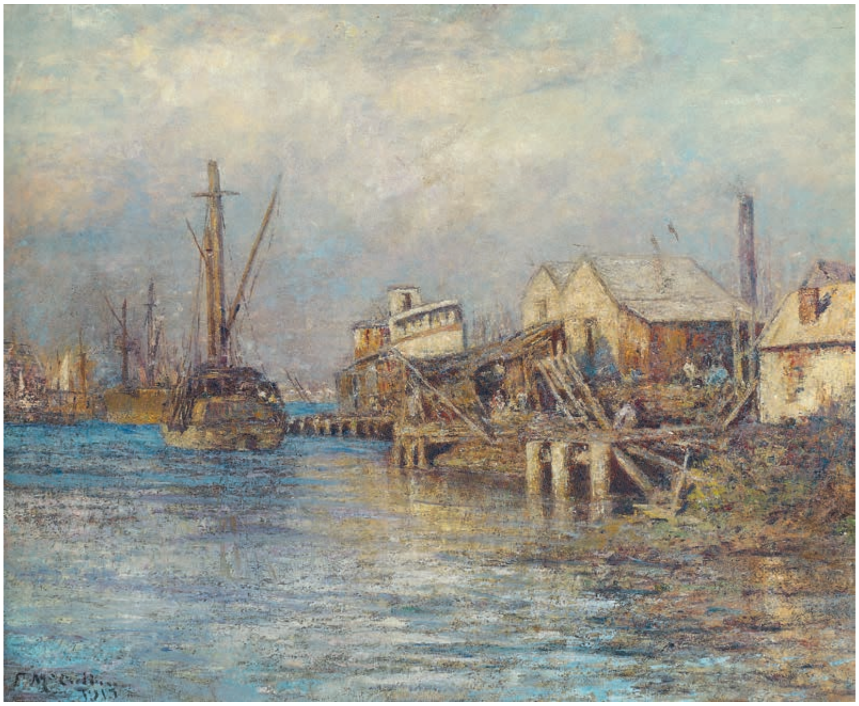
Curated by Ursula Hoff, the following year *Meanjin* published her perceptive article on McCubbin, referring to his use of the open-air sketch preparatory to the larger canvases 'painted in the studio, in a manner combining the broken colour of Impressionism with poetic romanticism.' She continued:

One such sketch was *Williamstown* 1909 (Harry Abrahams Esq.). It was to be seen in the Centenary Exhibition alongside the larger work from the Adelaide National Gallery. The open-air sketch, with its very bright blues and greens intermingling with spots of red shows an even more romantic heightening of colour than the finished picture, in which both colour and composition have been slightly conventionalized. … McCubbin saw Williamstown through the eyes of Turner.[5]

McCubbin's life-long interest in J.M.W. Turner – especially his late works and watercolours of Venice – increased considerably after being admired at first hand during his visit to England in 1907. Describing them as 'dreams of colour', Williamstown gave McCubbin the opportunity to paint his own spontaneous works of sparkling light.[6]

Some twenty-five Williamstown subjects are known, twenty-three in oil, two in watercolour. Most were painted on sketching tablets. The watercolours, *Williamstown*, c. 1909 (Art Gallery of South Australia) and *Mid-Summer Glow*, c.1909, (formerly McCubbin Family) are highly Turneresque.[7] Complete within themselves, they also served as studies for the major oil painting of the series, *The Old Ship, Williamstown*, c.1909 – 15 (private collection). Its view is taken from the other side of the sheds in our painting.

Williamstown Landscape, 1909 remained in the McCubbin family collection until its sale to the Art Gallery of South Australia in 1952. As McCubbin's son, Louis, had been many years director of the Gallery previously, he would have ensured that it acquired something special. This is confirmed by its warm reception on first public showing. The Adelaide *News* described it as 'an excellent medium-sized' work.[8] And the Adelaide *Mail* claimed it to be 'as fine as the well-known "Stone Crusher" in the same gallery'.[9] The Gallery's *Bulletin* for October 1952 hailed it as 'an excellent example of [McCubbin's] late period.' It continued:



Frederick McCubbin
The old slip, Williamstown, 1915
oil on canvas
92.0 x 117.5 cm
Private collection

The serenity of early summer and the glow of afternoon light are beautifully expressed in this canvas by means of broken touches of opalescent colour, laid on with a palette-knife. The mood is that of romantic impressionism.[10] *Williamstown Landscape*, 1909 with its romance of light and colour represents a singular work in McCubbin's oeuvre.

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1. Frederick McCubbin letter to Tom Roberts, 27 January 1909 (*Letters to Tom Roberts*, vol. II, no. 18, Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales)
2. MacDonald, J., *The Art of Frederick McCubbin*, Lothian Press, Melbourne, 1916, p. 40
3. *Spring Exhibition*, Joseph Brown Gallery, Melbourne, 1 – 10 September 1980, cat. 62 (illus.), as 'Williamstown'
4. *Frederick McCubbin Exhibition, To Mark The Centenary of the Artist's Birth in 1855*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1955, cats. 28 and 29
5. Hoff, U., 'The Phases of McCubbin's Art', *Meanjin*, Melbourne, vol. 15, no. 3, 1956, p. 305
6. Frederick McCubbin letter to Annie McCubbin, 19 July 1907, McCubbin Papers, La Trobe Library, State Library of Victoria, MS8525La
7. *Mid-Summer Glow*, c.1909, watercolour, 23 x 24 cm, sold Christie's, Melbourne, 3 May 1988, lot 140
8. Francis, I., 'Aust. pictures help gallery', *The News*, Adelaide, 22 October 1952, p. 2
9. George, E., 'Art', *The Mail*, Adelaide, 1 November 1952, p. 42
10. ' "Williamstown Landscape" by Frederick McCubbin (1855-1917)', *Bulletin of the National Gallery of South Australia*, vol. 14, no. 2, October 1952, np. (illus.)

DAVID THOMAS

ELIOTH GRUNER

18

(1882 – 1939)
WINDSOR LANDSCAPE, 1929
oil on canvas
51.0 x 61.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: GRUNER / 1929
inscribed with title on gallery label attached verso:
Windsor Landscape
bears inscription on stretcher bar verso:
WINTER LANDSCAPE

ESTIMATE: $60,000 – 80,000

PROVENANCE

Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
Mr Norman Pope, acquired from the above in 1929
Mr and Mrs Saul Symonds, Sydney, by 1940
Commercial Banking Company, Sydney
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1982 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Society of Artists' Annual Exhibition, Education Department's Art Gallery, Sydney, 7 September – 4 October 1929, cat. 102
Loan Exhibition of the Works of Elioth Gruner, National Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 21 December 1932 – 21 February 1933, no. 62
Elioth Gruner Memorial Loan Exhibition, National Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 17 April – 31 May 1940, cat. 41 (label attached verso)

We are grateful to Steven Miller, Head of the Edmund and Joanna Capon Research Library and Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, for his assistance with this catalogue entry.

'the old type of landscape… advances like a huge tide – washing its way into a thousand households, filling up our open spaces on living walls. It will always be in demand.'[1]
- Sydney Ure-Smith, 1926

With this bold statement, the publisher Sydney Ure-Smith stated a truth about Australian painting in the 1920s. However, he was also using this editorial in *Art in Australia* to praise the new paintings brought back from European journeys by Elioth Gruner and Roy de Maistre, and in so doing, signal his ongoing support for Sydney's nascent modernist art world. Gruner's reputation as one of this country's most celebrated landscape artists has taken a shaking in London during an encounter with Sir William Orpen. Standing in front of his paintings at the Government-sponsored *Exhibition of Works of Australian Artists* in 1923, the elder British artist roundly criticised the Australian's technique, unaware that the Exhibition Manager standing next to him was in fact Gruner himself. Embarrassed, Orpen tried to rectify the awkwardness by giving some technical and aesthetic advice which he hoped would be of benefit. To his credit, Gruner, an introverted but thoughtful man, considered the conversation deeply over the next months, particularly when viewing original paintings by Cézanne and others in France. On his return to Australia, he put his ideas into practice and by the end of the decade, when *Windsor landscape*, 1929, was painted, Gruner had 'made a shift towards a more contemporary idiom, embracing colour like never before, and confirming his resolve to simplify his compositions with a greater control and clarity of form.'[2]

The attitudinal differences in these later landscapes can be seen clearly when compared with *The White Road, Mt. Lofty*, 1926 (lot 19). This earlier painting still adheres to Gruner's pre-Europe palette and design but is energised in its paint strokes by the subsequent encounter with Cézanne. By comparison, *Windsor Landscape* has a quietude of benevolent order, emphasised through the artist's mature technique. Gruner still retains the example set by Claude Lorrain of a foreground, middle ground and distance treated as three distinct steps, akin to stage sets, but instead of blending the edges in the traditional manner, Gruner flattens his lands into intersecting planes, blocks and colour shifts. There are multiple angles and directions in *Windsor Landscape*, from the outcrops of trees to the sharpened lines at the edges of paddocks, all preceded by the conversely gentle contours of the hills. Smoke from farm burn-offs emphasise the land's human character, and the distant rise of the Blue Mountains are just that, a misty two-tone blue painted boldly and devoid of detail, yet still retaining an uncanny accuracy. Surmounting it all is the artist's 'lyrical outburst of delight in the beauty of light's mysterious penetration from outer space. For Gruner's skies have the fourth dimension of infinity. They go beyond the dome of the atmosphere.'[3]

In March 1929, Gruner was honoured with a special edition of *Art in Australia*, devoted to his career, and in January the next year, he was awarded his fourth Wynne Prize for Landscape Painting at the Art Gallery of New South Wales.

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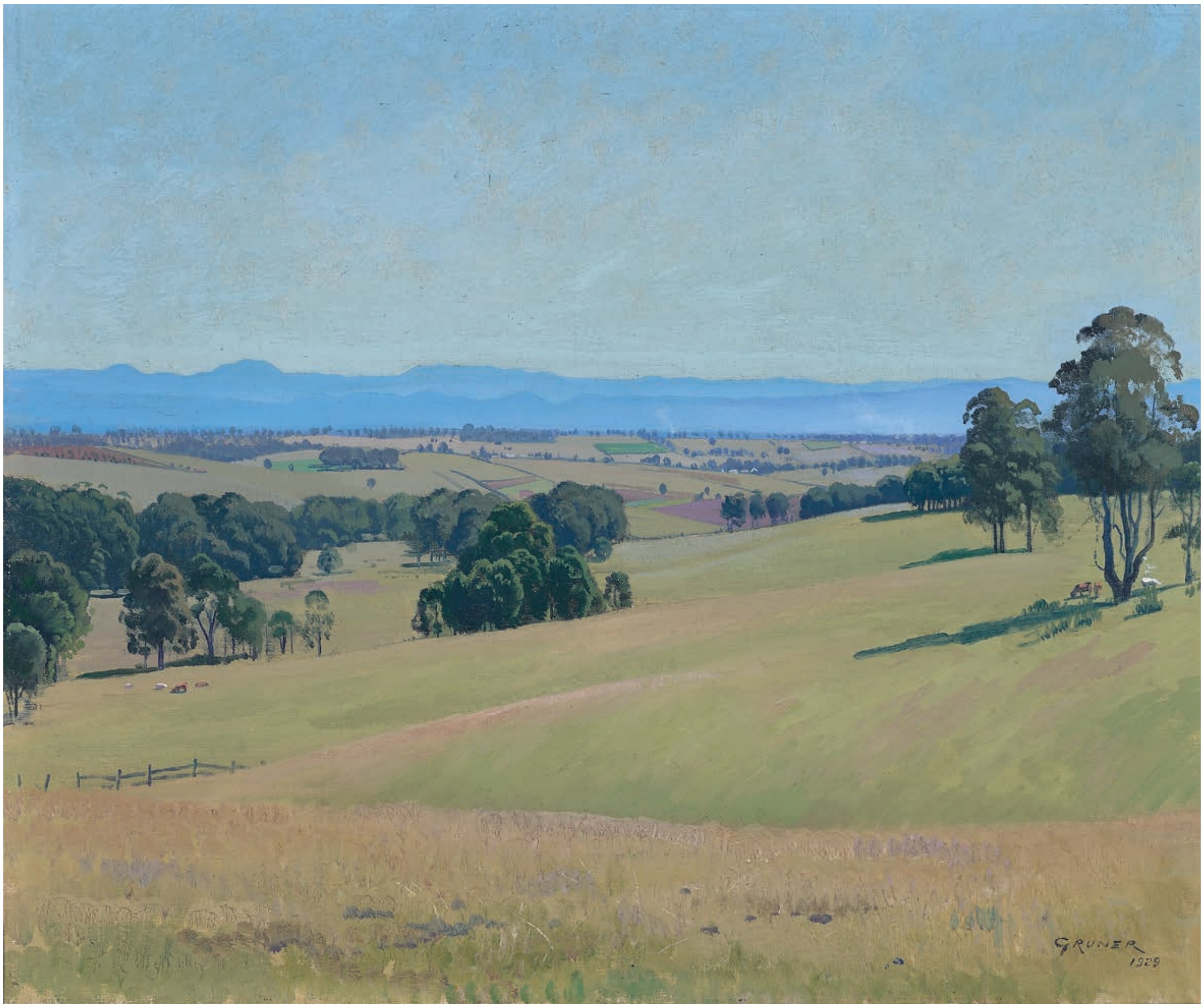
1. Ure Smith, S., 'Editorial', *Art in Australia: a quarterly magazine*, Sydney, 3rd series, no. 17, September 1926, p. 5
2. Wilson, N., 'Elioth Gruner: Australia's laureate of landscape', Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 11 May 2011, p. 6
3. Lindsay, N., 'Foreword', *Elioth Gruner: twenty-four reproductions in colour from original oil paintings*, Shepherd Press, Sydney, 1947, n.p.

ANDREW GAYNOR


GRUNER
1929

ELIOTH GRUNER

19

(1882 – 1939)
THE WHITE ROAD, MT LOFTY, S.A., 1926
oil on canvas
51.5 x 61.5 cm
signed and dated lower right: GRUNER / 1926

ESTIMATE: $40,000 – 60,000

PROVENANCE

Macquarie Galleries, Sydney
Dr H. C. Moxham, Sydney, acquired from the above in 1926
Lawsons, Sydney, February 1945 (as 'The White Road, Mt. Lofty, S.A.')
Commercial Banking Company, Sydney
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1982 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Exhibition of Oil Paintings by Elioth Gruner, Macquarie Galleries, Sydney, 10 – 21 August 1926, cat. 26 (as 'October Morning')
Loan Exhibition of the Works of Elioth Gruner, National Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 21 December 1932 – 21 February 1933, cat. 80

LITERATURE

Ashton, H., 'Gruner's Pictures. Progress and Honesty. Searching for Facts', *The Sun*, Sydney, 10 August 1926, p. 8 (as 'October Morning')
MacNally, J., 'Elioth Gruner. Notable Exhibition', *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 11 August 1926, p. 5 (as 'October Morning')
'Oil Paintings. Mr. Gruner's Exhibition', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 11 August 1926, p. 10 (as 'October Morning')
McCrae, H., 'Homage to the Greatness of Gruner', *Sunday Times*, Sydney, 15 August 1926, p. 2 (as 'Morning on Mount Lofty')
Burdett, B., 'The Later Work of Elioth Gruner', in Ure Smith, S., and Gellert, L. (eds.), *Art in Australia*, Sydney, 3rd series, no. 27, March 1929, Ure Smith, Sydney, pl. 28, p. 85 (illus.)
'Sundry Shows', *The Bulletin*, Sydney, 28 February 1945, p. 2 (as 'The White Road, Mt. Lofty, S.A.')

RELATED WORK

Piccadilly Valley, 1926, oil on canvas, 62.5 x 76.2 cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

We are grateful to Steven Miller, Head of the Edmund and Joanna Capon Research Library and Archive, Art Gallery of New South Wales, for his assistance with this catalogue entry.

By the early 1920s, Elioth Gruner was a celebrated name in Australian painting. Travelling to London for the first time in 1923, he repeatedly visited the National Gallery to examine the paintings of Claude Lorraine. Gruner's aesthetics were an extension of his training under the arch-conservative Julian Ashton so it is somewhat surprising that after London, he journeyed to France where he closely studied paintings by Cézanne and Gauguin. Following his return to Australia in 1925, Gruner's subsequent works put a new emphasis 'on structure, pattern and rhythm of forms in the landscape.'[1] *The white road, Mt. Lofty, S.A.*, 1926, is one of these and gallery audiences responded positively when he exhibited the new paintings at the Macquarie Galleries in Sydney in August 1926; the show was almost sold out in two days.

In the months prior, Gruner had travelled extensively though the Australian countryside, mostly alone and camping out for days in a chosen location, studying and sketching from many angles. Towards the end of 1925, he took an extended journey to Adelaide, 'in secluded circumstance,'[2] where he painted this work. Mt Lofty is located near to the city and Gruner utilises the curving white road as a centre-anchoring motif. The influence of Cézanne in the foreground is pronounced through the individual strokes of colour where Gruner seeks to delineate each leaf in the trees, creating the 'insinuation of an unseen thing … the wind… advancing over a forested valley. The strong leaves sprang backwards and forward as if controlled by steel springs, while the young ones fluttered in millions so far as the eye was able to see.'[3] The painting's exhibited title was 'October morning', suggesting this was the month when the work was initially completed before he left the location; however, the 1926 signature and date indicates that he must have worked on it again at a later stage. In reviewing the Macquarie Galleries' exhibition, *The white road, Mt. Lofty, S.A.* (as 'October morning') was singled out by the *Daily Telegraph*'s critic who considered it 'quite the best in the display.'[4]

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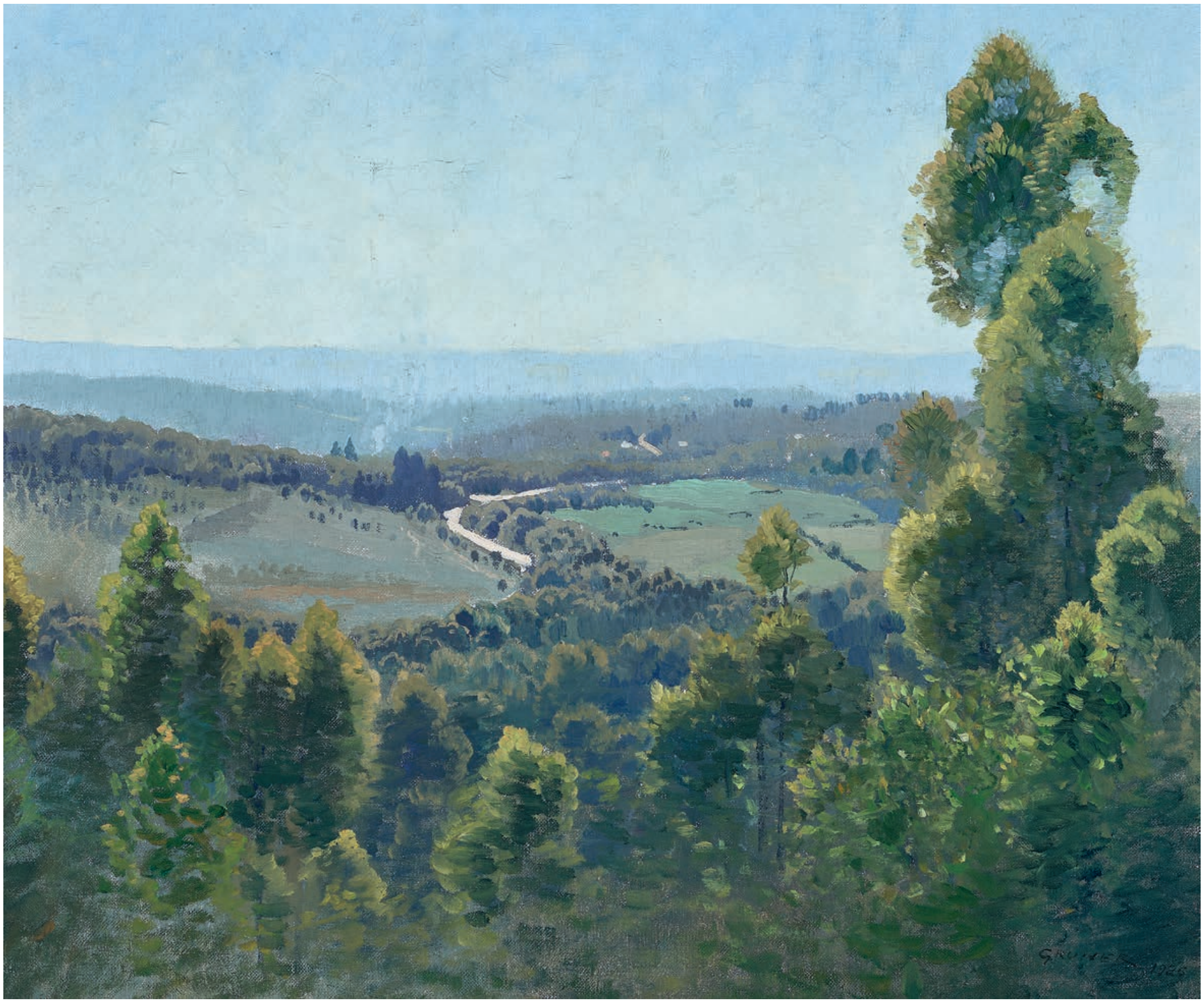
1. Clark, D., *Elioth Gruner: Texture of light*, Canberra Museum and Gallery, ACT, 2014, p. 7
2. Burdett, B., 'The Later Work of Elioth Gruner', *Art in Australia*, (Gruner edition), Sydney, 3rd series, no. 27, 1 March 1929, n.p.
3. McRae, H., 'Homage to greatness of Gruner', *Sunday Times*, Sydney, 15 August 1926, p. 2. McRae was describing the companion work *Morning on Mt. Lofty*, 1926.
4. MacNally, J., 'Elioth Gruner. Notable Exhibition', *The Daily Telegraph*, Sydney, 11 August 1926, p. 5

ANDREW GAYNOR



PENLEIGH BOYD

20

(1890 – 1923)
GREY DAY, SYDNEY HARBOUR
(VIEW OF NORTH HEAD, ROSE BAY), 1922
oil on canvas
71.0 x 81.0 cm
signed and dated lower left: Penleigh Boyd 22

ESTIMATE: $65,000 – 85,000

PROVENANCE

Sedon Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired
from the above in 1958 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Possibly: *Oil Paintings of Sydney Harbour by Penleigh Boyd*,
Athenaeum Hall, Melbourne, 14 – 25 August 1922

RELATED WORK

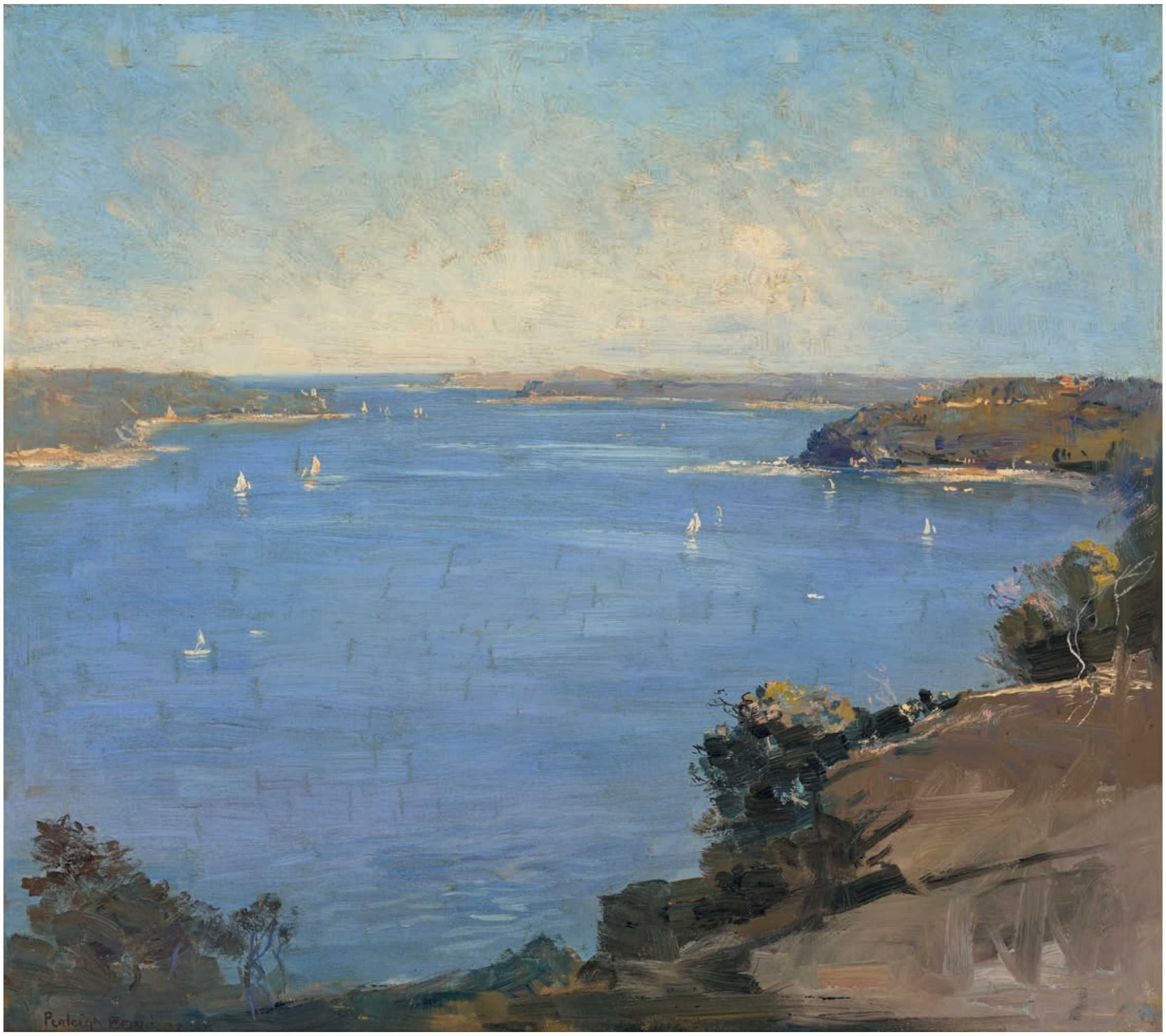
Morning, Middle Harbour, 1922, oil on canvas, 76.1 x 101.7 cm,
in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

The highly precocious Penleigh Boyd was a member of the great and immensely gifted Boyd dynasty of Australian artists. Son of Emma Minnie and Arthur Merric Boyd, his *Springtime* was hung in London's Royal Academy in 1911. In 1913, his unsullied landscape view won second prize in the Federal Capital Site Competition, and in 1914, he was awarded the Wynne Prize for landscape painting. Following engagement in the First World War when he was badly gassed at Ypres, he returned to Australia, continuing to paint landscapes in the tradition of Arthur Streeton. Full of the atmospheric freshness that comes from painting *en plein air*, his vision, nevertheless, is gentler. Seeking the poetic in nature, first inspired by his teacher Frederick McCubbin when Boyd was a student at the National Gallery School, Melbourne, he responded to its quiet, lyrical moods, painting landscapes touched by the post-war nationalism of the 1920s. These wonderfully optimistic images reveal a land of hope and promise found in the grandeur and quietude of the Australian landscape. He also continued the Hans Heysen tradition, as in the watercolour *The Edge of the Forest*, 1919 (Ledger Collection, Benalla Art Gallery, Victoria) in praise of the mighty and noble gum tree.

Boyd's favourite painting sites included the River Yarra and Portsea on the Mornington Peninsula in Victoria; and Sydney Harbour, the Hawkesbury and Blue Mountains in New South Wales. As a colourist he was unrivalled, the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne acquiring through the Felton Bequest that symphony of golden wattle, *The Breath of Spring*, 1919 in the same year it was painted. The rich output of these years is also seen today in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra in its numerous holdings of Boyd's paintings of the time, *The Blue Mountains*, c.1922 and *Early Morning, Watson's Bay,* 1922 being fine examples.

Sparkling colour filtered through a gentle haze is the hallmark of Boyd's art – and encapsulated here in *Grey Day, Sydney Harbour*, 1922. All is set within a compositional format that appealed to Boyd and features with variations in several important works of this time. In *Morning, Middle Harbour,* 1922 (Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney) there is a similarity in the expanse of water surrounded by land, as again in *Hawkesbury River,* 1922 (private collection). In each a foreground closeness leads on to the striking blue waters beyond. Ringed in luxuriant greens and crowned with an expansive sky beyond, the subtle colour harmonies of these open, panoramic images of optimism speak of harmony and freedom, meditative, free from the shackles of the past.

DAVID THOMAS


Penleigh Boyd

SIDNEY NOLAN 21

(1917 – 1992)
CAMELS IN THE DESERT, 1951
Ripolin enamel and red ochre oil paint on composition board
60.0 x 90.5 cm
signed and dated lower right: Sidney Nolan / 1951

ESTIMATE: $140,000 – 180,000

PROVENANCE

Artarmon Public School, Sydney, a gift from the artist, 1953
Sotheby's, Melbourne, 30 July 1986, lot 84
The collection of Lord McAlpine of West Green, United Kingdom
Lauraine Diggins Fine Art, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in March 1995 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

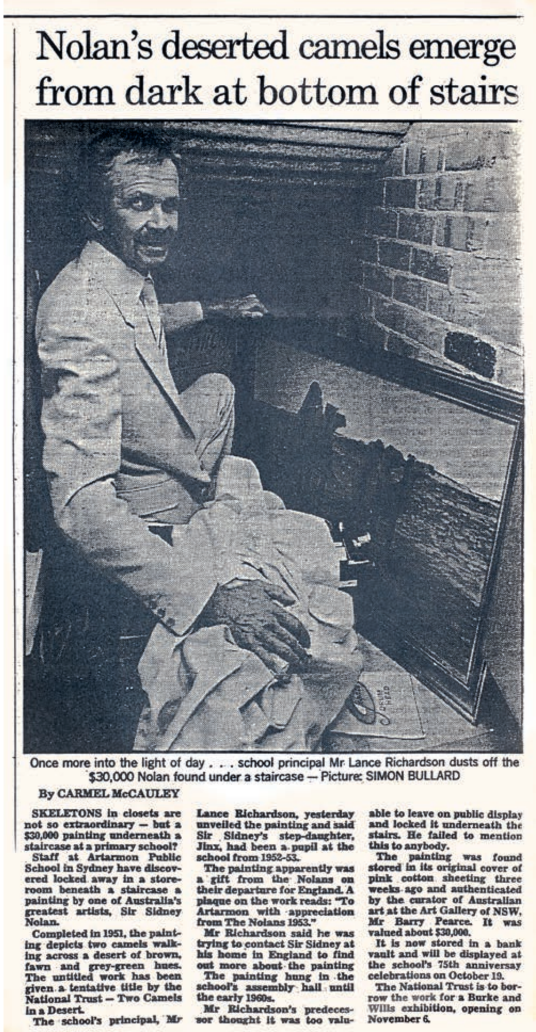
Sidney Nolan: Burke and Wills, S. H. Ervin Gallery, The National Trust of Australia, Sydney, 7 November 1985 – 26 January 1986
Sidney Nolan: Landscapes and Legends, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 3 June – 26 July 1987, and touring to Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 11 August – 27 September 1987; Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 21 October – 29 November 1987; Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide, 15 December 1987 – 31 January 1988 (label attached verso)
Different Views: Aspects of the Landscape, Lauraine Diggins Fine Art, Melbourne, 15 March – 13 April 1995, cat. 30
Sidney Nolan: Desert and Drought, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 6 June – 17 August 2003, cat. 17 (label attached verso)

LITERATURE

McCauley, C., 'Nolan's deserted camels emerge from dark at bottom of stairs', *The Australian*, Sydney, 24 September 1985, p. 3 (illus.)
Clark, J., *Sidney Nolan Landscapes & Legends*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1987, p. 108 (illus.)
Smith, G., *Sidney Nolan: Desert and Drought*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2003, cat. 17, p. 147
Smee, S., 'Fred Williams and Company', in Hart, D., *Fred Williams: Infinite Horizons*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 2011, p. 214 (illus.)

RELATED WORK

Camels, Central Australia, 1950, Ripolin enamel and red ochre oil paint on composition board, 122.0 x 152.0 cm, in the collection of the Reserve Bank of Australia, Sydney



Nolan's deserted camels emerge from dark at bottom of stairs

Once more into the light of day . . . school principal Mr Lance Richardson dusts off the $30,000 Nolan found under a staircase — Picture: SIMON BULLARD

By CARMEL McCAULEY

SKELETONS in closets are not so extraordinary — but a $30,000 painting underneath a staircase at a primary school?

Staff at Artarmon Public School in Sydney have discovered locked away in a storeroom beneath a staircase a painting by one of Australia's greatest artists, Sir Sidney Nolan.

Completed in 1951, the painting depicts two camels walking across a desert of brown, fawn and grey-green hues. The untitled work has been given a tentative title by the National Trust — Two Camels in a Desert.

The school's principal, Mr Lance Richardson, yesterday unveiled the painting and said Sir Sidney's step-daughter, Jinx, had been a pupil at the school from 1952-53.

The painting apparently was a gift from the Nolans on their departure for England. A plaque on the work reads: "To Artarmon with appreciation from The Nolans 1953."

Mr Richardson said he was trying to contact Sir Sidney at his home in England to find out more about the painting

The painting hung in the school's assembly hall until the early 1960s.

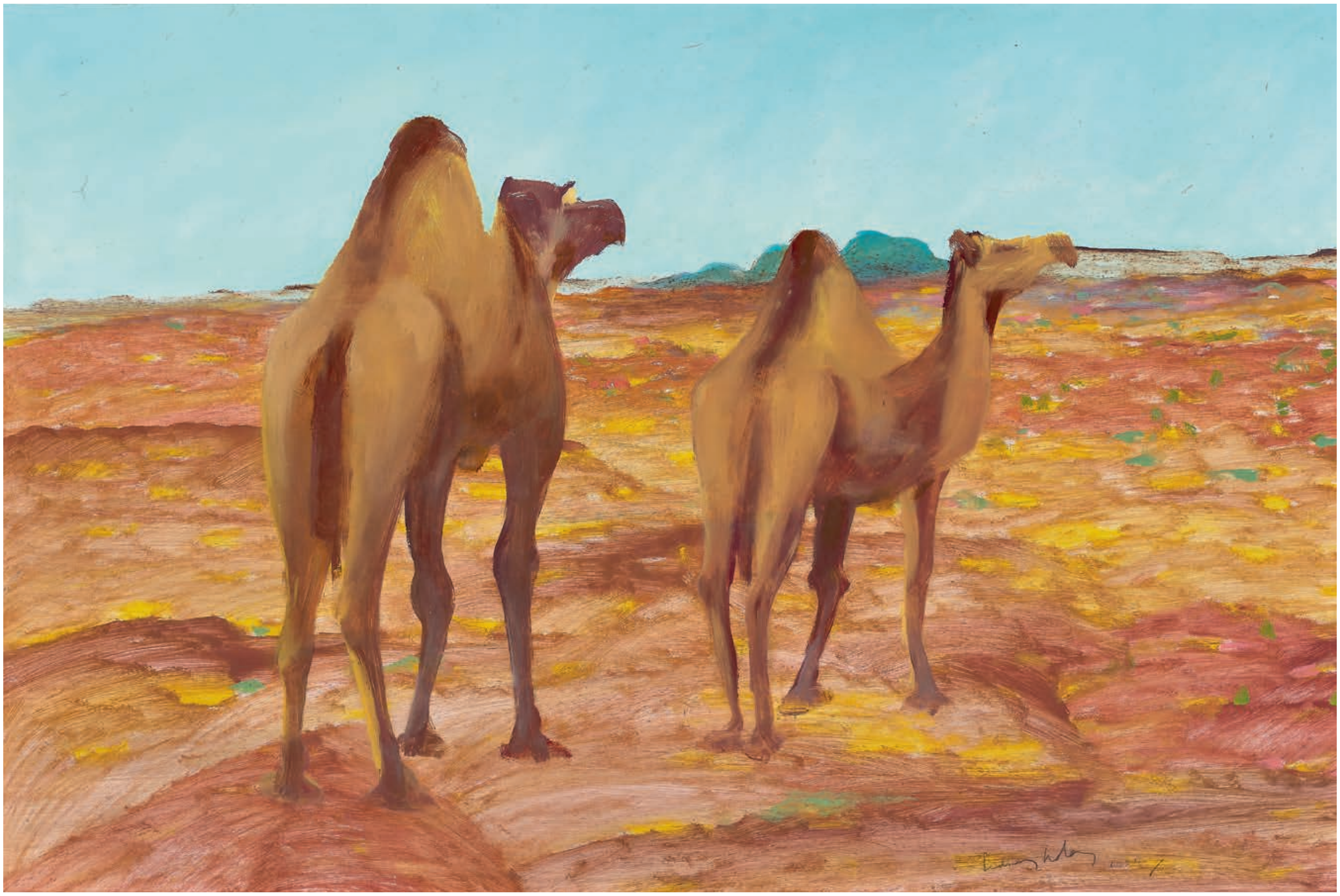
Mr Richardson's predecessor thought it was too valuable to leave on public display and locked it underneath the stairs. He failed to mention this to anybody.

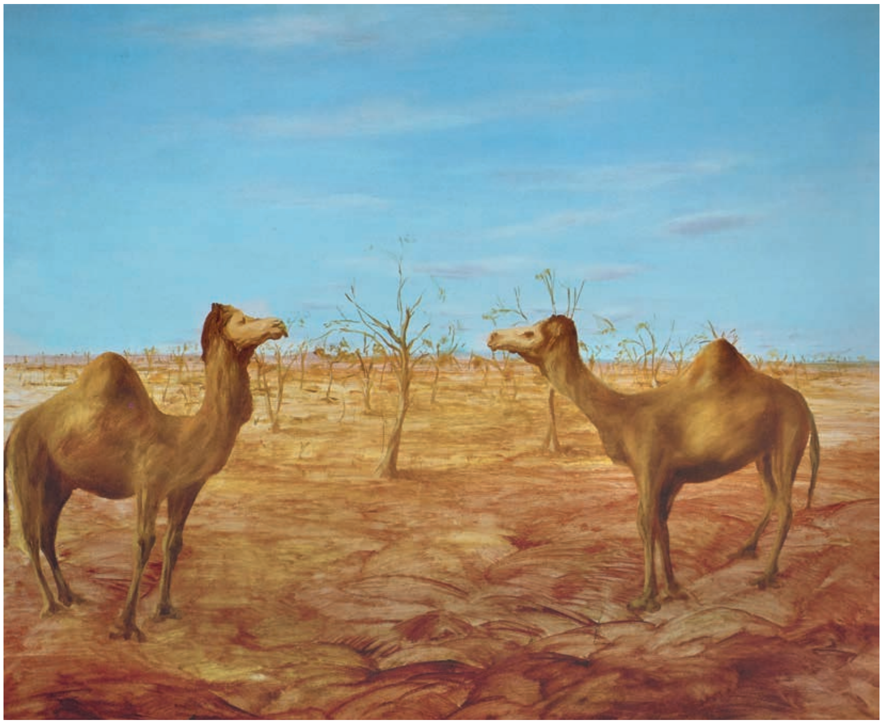
The painting was found stored in its original cover of pink cotton sheeting three weeks ago and authenticated by the curator of Australian art at the Art Gallery of NSW, Mr Barry Pearce. It was valued about $30,000.

It is now stored in a bank vault and will be displayed at the school's 75th anniversay celebrations on October 19.

The National Trust is to borrow the work for a Burke and Wills exhibition, opening on November 6.

Artarmon Public School's principal Mr Lance Richardson dusts off the Nolan found under a staircase, 1985
photographer: Simon Bullard
originally published in The Australian, Sydney, 24 September 1985, p. 3



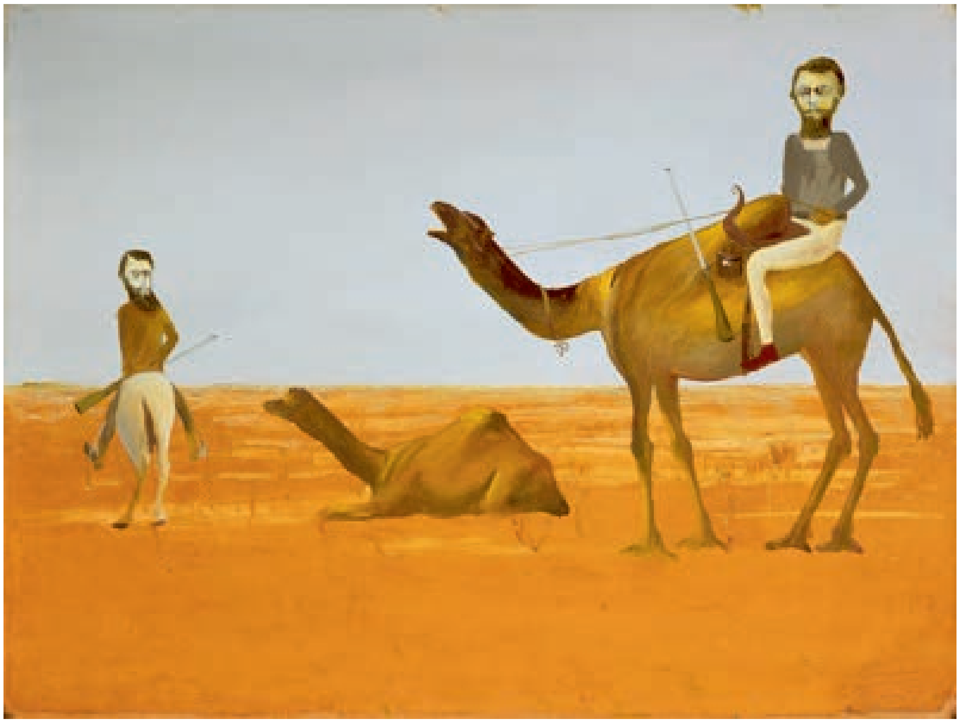


Sidney Nolan
Camels, Central Australia, 1950
Ripolin enamel and red ochre
oil paint on composition board
122.0 x 152.0 cm
Reserve Bank of Australia

Sidney Nolan travelled extensively through Central Australia in 1949 and in addition to transforming his understanding of the country, the experience revolutionised his vision of the landscape. In a letter to his friend and fellow artist, Albert Tucker, in January 1950, he wrote: ‘We had a wonderful trip to the back of beyond, it is really the proper Australia, old, dignified and coherent… We did a lot of flying in small mail planes & …we just about covered the whole area of the inland … the country in itself has a powerful charm. The light reveals everything in a microscopic way & colours carry for almost frightening distances… Such intensity & duration of colour gives you quite a strange feeling for a while. Anyway it is around this point that I seem to be painting now.’[1]

Dated 1951, although possibly painted two years earlier, *Camels in the Desert* exemplifies this approach, the dark red ochre and citrus orange of the dry ground extending deep into the distance and emphasising the overwhelming vastness of the land.[2] The brilliant intensity of the desert light which Nolan described as opalescent, ‘like mother-of-pearl and … glowing in transparent layers’[3] is miraculously captured in paint, the bleached blue sky appearing to radiate with light and heat. To achieve this, Nolan used enamel paint, noting that, ‘in order to reproduce this light… which was flooding over everything, one had to adopt a different sort of palette from the conventional oil palette one and Ripolin on masonite seemed to… set up the effect I wanted’.[4] His practice was to begin by priming composition board panels with a white ground which he sometimes exposed by scraping subsequent paint layers away. The sheen of enamel paint, evenly applied across the smooth surface of the painting support, also contributed to the luminosity of these paintings by reflecting external sources of light.

The subject of camels in the desert featured in numerous works around this time and is perhaps most familiar from the Burke and Wills series painted between 1948-50, in which the intrepid but ultimately doomed explorers are often depicted with the camels that were such a critical part of their expedition to cross Australia. In relation to these paintings Nolan wrote of ‘the strange conjunction of a man on a camel, from which he surveys the landscape as if he is walking on giant stilts’.[5] In the 1961 series that reprises the subject, the explorers and their camels are depicted in a much more abstract way, Nolan’s technique



Sidney Nolan
Burke and Wills expedition, 1948
enamel paint on composition board
91.3 x 122.2 cm
Nolan Collection, managed by Canberra Museum
and Gallery on behalf of the Australian Government

and palette merging them with their surroundings so that they are almost part of the landscape. In this picture too, Nolan's palette is deliberately pared back and the camels, painted the same colour as the desert, are connected visually and metaphorically to the country they inhabit. Cynthia Nolan summed up this idea in words, writing to her sister in 1949, 'Sidney is dreaming camels … Cattle & horses & white men do not fit this country.'[6]

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1. Sidney Nolan to Albert Tucker, 26 January 1950, quoted in McCaughey, P., (ed.), *Bert & Ned: The Correspondence of Albert Tucker and Sidney Nolan*, The Miegunyah Press, Carlton, 2006, p. 110
2. The painting is dated 1951, however Geoffrey Smith gives the earlier date of 1949 in the exhibition catalogue, *Sidney Nolan: Desert and Drought*, noting that the 1951 inscription was made later, in 1953. See Smith, G., *Sidney Nolan: Desert and Drought*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2003, cat. 17, p. 147
3. Sidney Nolan quoted in Lynn, E., and Nolan, S., *Sidney Nolan – Australia*, Bay Books, 1979, p. 180
4. Smith, op. cit., p. 22
5. Rosenthal, T. G., *Sidney Nolan*, Thames & Hudson, London, p. 122
6. Cynthia Nolan to Margaret Reed, Turner Station, postmarked 9 September 1949, Jinx Nolan Papers quoted in Smith, op. cit., p. 39

KIRSTY GRANT

CHARLES BLACKMAN

22

(1928 – 2018)
SUITE OF PAINTINGS, 1959 – 60
oil on hardboard
103.5 x 119.0 cm
signed lower right: BLACKMAN

ESTIMATE: $80,000 – 120,000

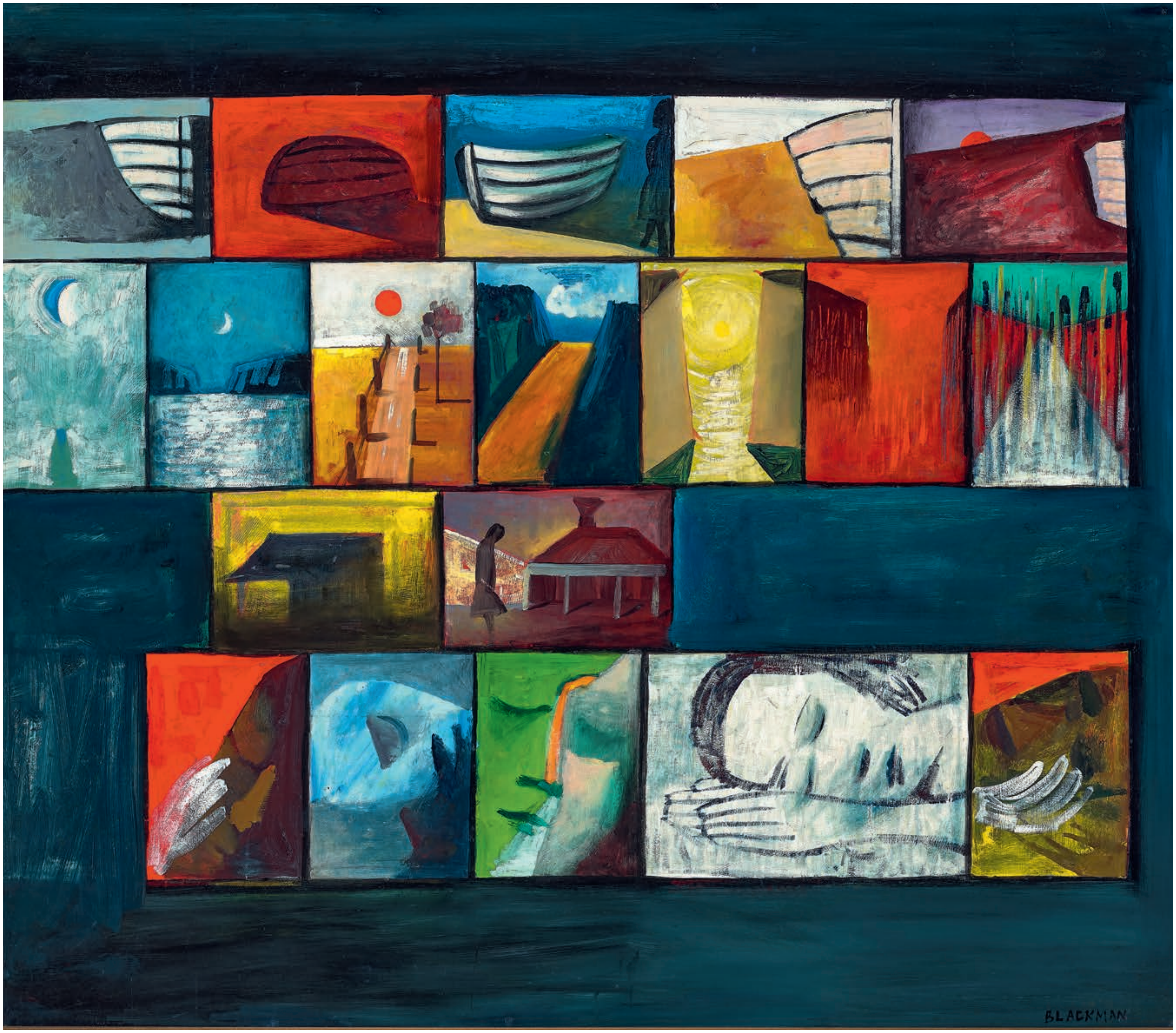
PROVENANCE

Barbara Blackman AO, Canberra
National Bank of Australia Art Collection, acquired from the above in June 1997 (label attached verso)

RELATED WORKS

Suite I, 1960, oil on hardboard, 122.0 x 183.0 cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Suite II, 1960, oil and synthetic polymer paint on hardboard, 127.5 x 189.0cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Suite of Paintings [Suite III], 1960, oil on hardboard, 122.0 x 183.0 cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Suite VI, 1960, oil on hardboard, 120.7 x 182.2 cm, in the collection of the Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane

We are grateful to Felicity St John Moore for her assistance with this catalogue entry.


BLACKMAN

Charles Blackman was one of the longest living members of the generation of Melburnian artists known as the Antipodeans, defenders of the merits of figurative art and of a poetic and metaphysical foundation to contemporary painting. In 1960, Blackman brought a decade-long formal inquiry to culmination, developing his interest in sequential and contiguous images into larger compartmentalised systems he called suites. After exploring this new idea through works on paper in the mid-1950s and an experimental work comprising of 18 small pictures mounted on hessian, *Collection of Paintings*, 1959 (formerly in the collection of Mr and Mrs Brian Johnstone, Brisbane), Blackman painted six large works numbered Suites I – VI, with multifaceted views of shadowy figures with flowers. Blackman could juxtapose in these vignettes static groups and silhouetted glimpses of characters, creating poignant scenes of entrapment, isolation and revelation. Exhibited as a group, these large-scale Suites were met with considerable critical success, winning Blackman the Helena Rubinstein Travelling Art Scholarship in 1960. This prize funded travel to London where Blackman would work alongside fellow Australian émigré artists, profoundly influencing the course of the rest of his artistic career.

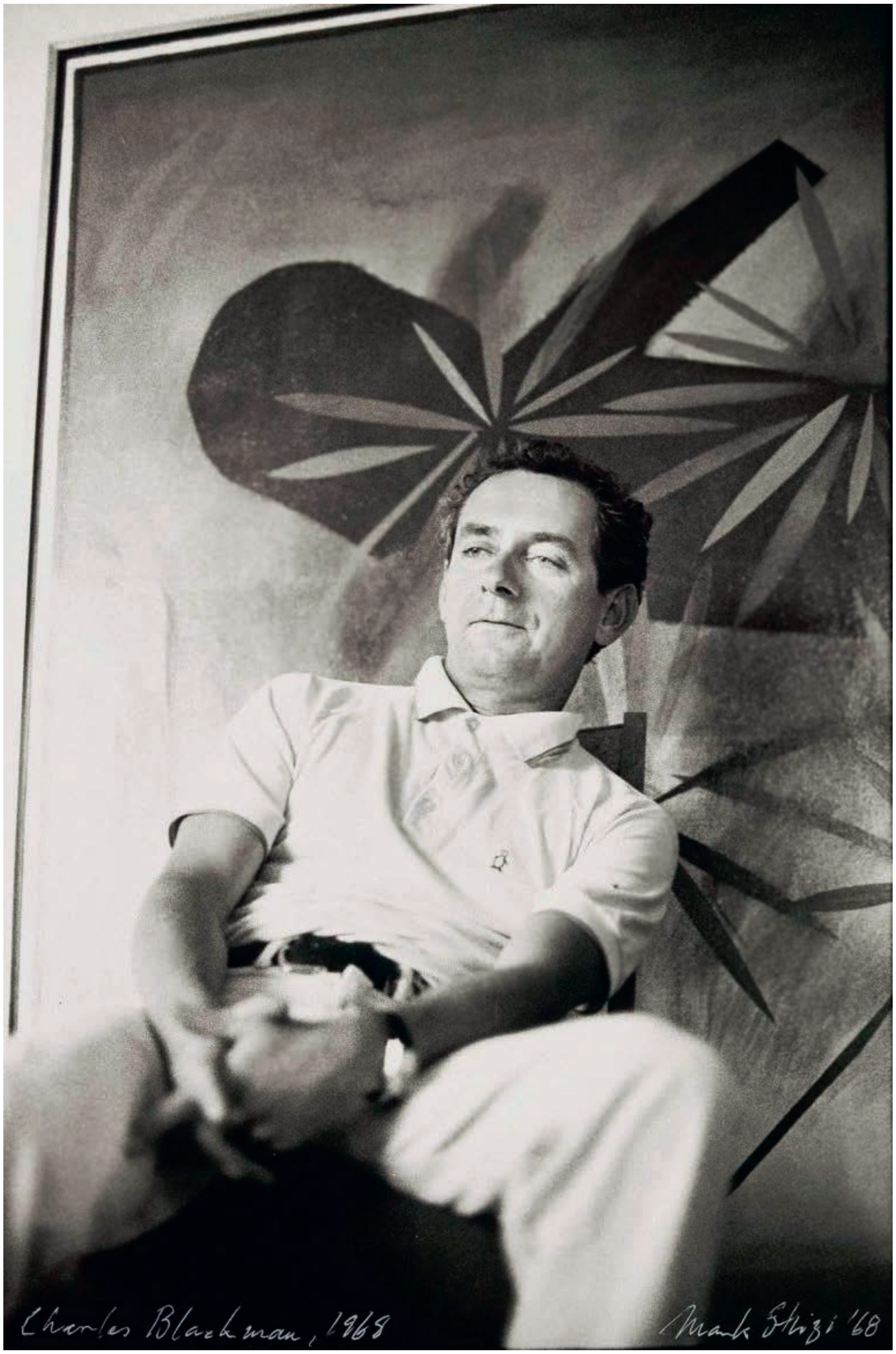
Produced alongside these numbered Suites painted specifically for the scholarship, were a number of large paintings of a similar format, some of which were exhibited in Blackman's sell-out exhibition in Brisbane's Johnstone Galleries in June 1960 (where three works bore the title 'Suite of Paintings'). This *Suite of Paintings*, 1959 – 60 in the collection of the National Bank of Australia was formerly held in the private collection of Barbara Blackman, the artist's wife, and was never exhibited commercially. Painted in London on Swedish hardboard, *Suite of Paintings* is composed of four uneven rows of alternating horizontal and portrait format scenes. The upper and lower edges of this suite are bordered in thick bands modulated black-blue paint, which seeps into last two sequential rows. The unevenness of this sequence is unusual in a Suite painting of this period, as are the thin black borders between each window.

Having confined the figurative element of this painting to five individual sleeping figures in the last row, Blackman veered sharply away from the crowded parade of masks and secret gatherings that characterised his earlier Suites. A sense of tension and pregnant possibility is instead created through vignettes of landscapes: empty and beached boats on stark shorelines; reflected moonlight on still water; receding pathways to nowhere and deserted bungalows illuminated by ominous red suns. This *Suite of Paintings* reunites many of Blackman's most popular motifs, painted in high key tones, and immediately legible graphic stylisation stripped of superfluous detail and outlining the most key elements with severe black lines. Reprising a motif from his major 1956 painting, *The Boat* (now in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria), the empty boats are transfigured into vessels of the imagination, having delivered the viewer to a non-specific oneiric location which can only be glimpsed at through narrow cut-out windows. The figures that inhabit this world seem to be able to float between the frames, appearing intermittently in the first and third rows. Felicity St John Moore suggests that the dreamlike contrasts in Blackman's works were inspired by the works of French symbolist painter Odilon Redon, 'a duality of dark and light, fantasy and fat, inside and outside, nightmare and drama, harshness and beauty, mysterious expression and pure plastic substance. This duality is internal as well as thematic… the imagery is enigmatic and multilayered.'[1]

Reiterating his imaginative propositions in separate small images, Blackman's suites operate like a rondo in music, with each return to the central statement increasing its emotive effect.[2] The anonymity of his silhouetted girls and sleeping faces obscured by loosely painted hands, emphasises the desolate loneliness and curious serenity of Blackman's dream world.

1. St John Moore, F., *Charles Blackman, Schoolgirls and Angels*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993, pp. 2 – 3
2. Shapcott, T., *Focus on Charles Blackman. Artists In Queensland*, University of Queensland Press, Brisbane, 1967, p. 42

LUCIE REEVES-SMITH


Charles Blackman, 1968
Mark Strizic '68

Charles Blackman, 1968
(from 'Involvement' and 'Portrait' series)
photographer: Mark Strizic
gelatin silver photograph on paper
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
© Mark Strizic

CHARLES BLACKMAN **23**

(1928 – 2018)
THREE FACES, 1964
oil on canvas on composition board
100.5 x 90.0 cm
signed and dated lower left: BLACKMAN 1964

ESTIMATE: $20,000 – 30,000

PROVENANCE

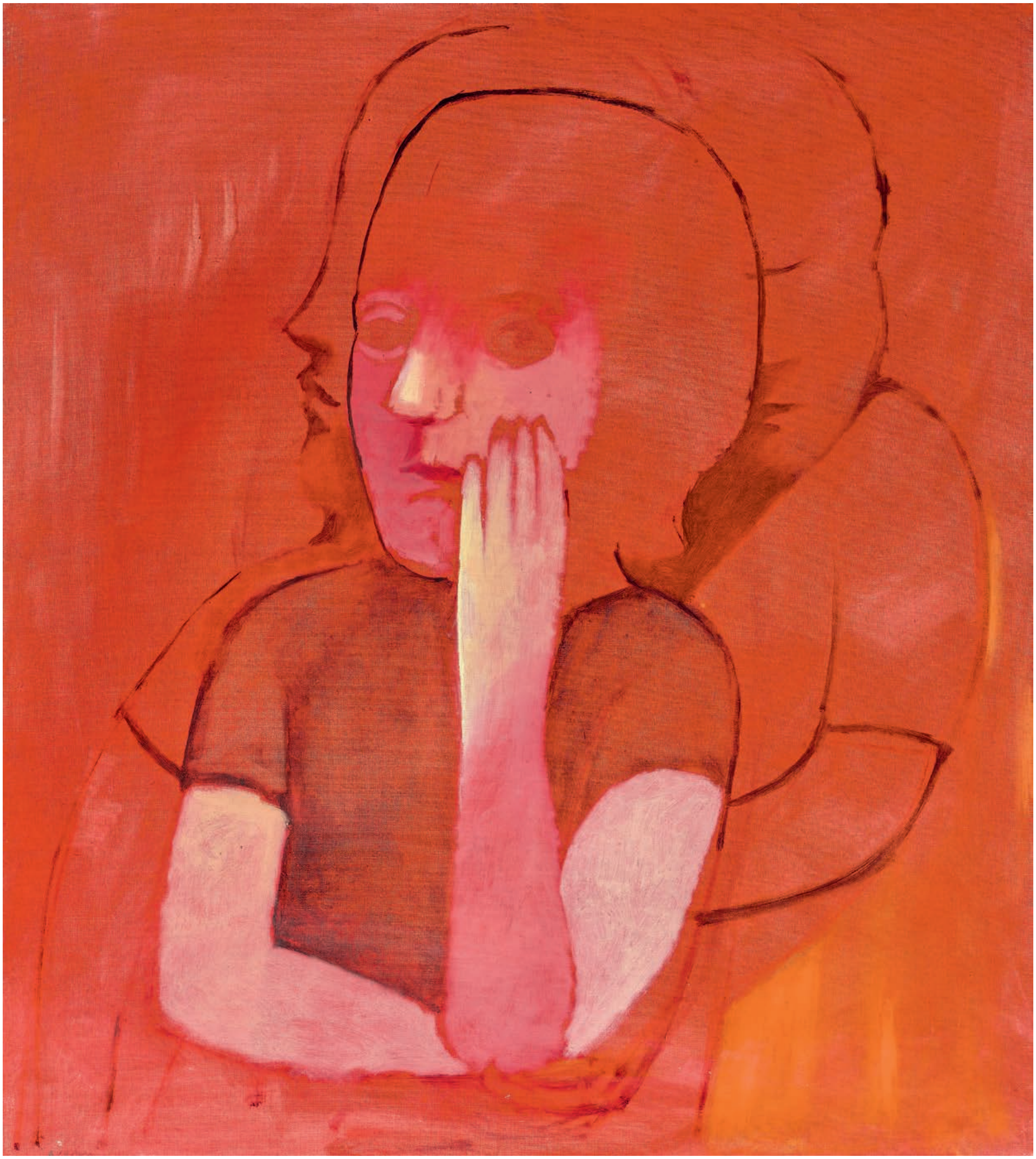
Private collection
Christie's, Melbourne, 13 March 1975, lot 476 (as 'Red Faces')
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 2
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 1
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 3; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 11, p. 24 (illus.)
Fenner, F., 'The Good Life: Paintings lost in the 70s', *Tamworth Daily Leader*, New South Wales, 1 June 1990



ALBERT TUCKER

24

(1914 – 1999)
THE CARD PLAYERS, 1961 – 73
oil on composition board
75.0 x 100.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: Tucker / 61 – 73
inscribed verso: IBIS IN FLIGHT

ESTIMATE: $150,000 – 200,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1978 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982 (label attached verso)
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 23

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 92, p. 105 (illus.)
'The National Australia Bank collection of modern art in the seventies', *National Bank, CBC Bank: Group News*, October 1982, p. 6 (illus.)

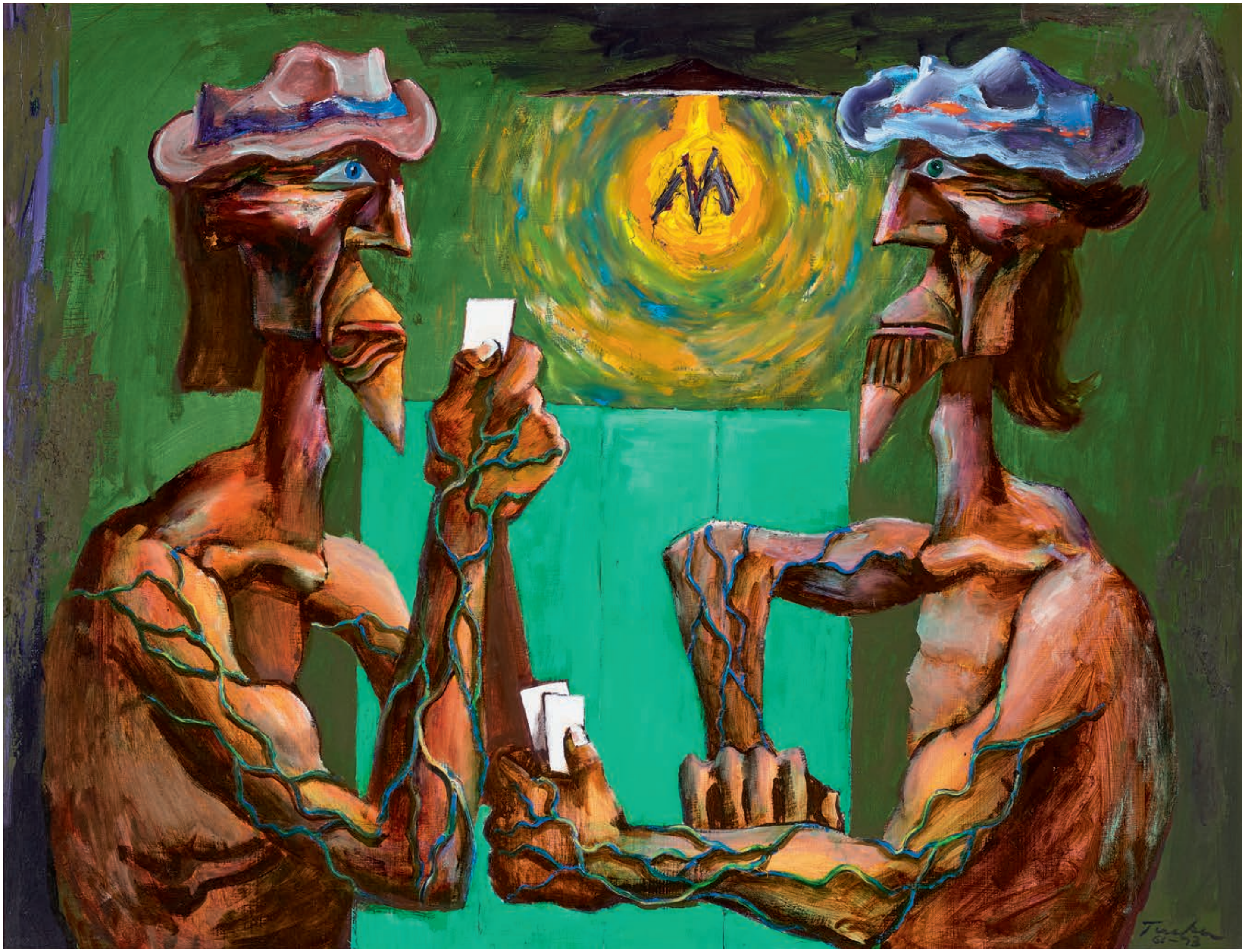
RELATED WORK

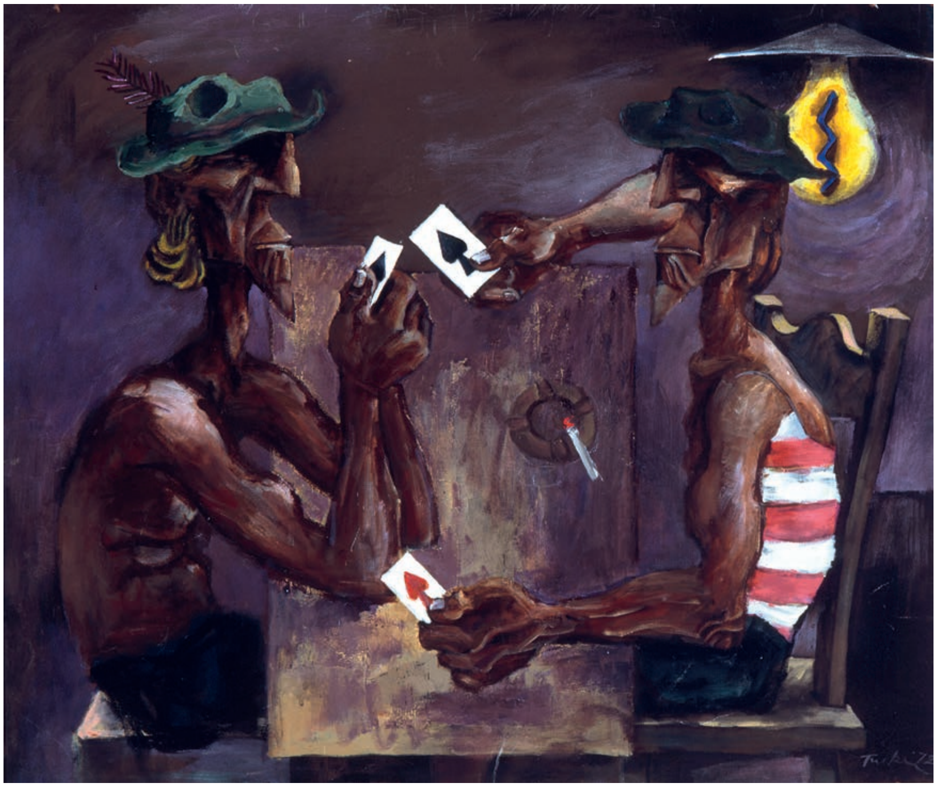
Card Players, 1972, oil on composition board, 77.5 x 92.0 cm, in the collection of Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

Albert Tucker left Australia bound for London in late 1947, recalling that, 'for me it was like undoing a coiled spring. You could go and see and experience things you had only known by report.'[1] He spent the next thirteen years living and working in Europe and America, being exposed to the art, history and rich culture of Paris, Rome, New York and other great cities. Absorbing all they had to offer, he experimented with technique and a diverse range of themes, synthesising and distilling these influences to develop his own distinctive style. For Tucker art was a vocation, and he held strongly to the belief 'that to create easy and saleable art was merely an acquired skill, [but] to create challenging and culturally important art was the true purpose of the artist.'[2] It was this uncompromising vision and Tucker's determination to make art of substance that sustained and motivated him and which, toward the end of the 1950s, saw him achieve the acknowledgement he had long sought.

A significant turning point occurred in 1958 when Alfred Barr, Director of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, saw examples of Tucker's recent paintings in the stockroom of Poindexter Gallery on his regular weekend rounds of the city's commercial galleries. Impressed by the strength and originality of what he saw, Barr recommended a purchase to the museum's Board and the subsequent acquisition of *Lunar Landscape* 1957 placed Tucker's work in the company of the best twentieth century artists in what was arguably the most significant collection of modern art in the world. Although his practice was yet to be acknowledged in this way by any major gallery in Australia, this critical recognition of his art gave Tucker the confidence to persist and pursue his current direction. Success continued and in the same year Tucker won the *Australian Women's Weekly* art competition, famously receiving the news that he had been awarded the one-thousand-pound prize at a time when he had only a few dollars left in his pocket.[3] A commercial exhibition in New York in 1960 resulted in the purchase of a second painting by MOMA, and another acquired for the collection of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.

Tucker returned to Australia in 1960 to participate in a major survey exhibition of his art of the past five years that was being organised by John Reed and the Museum of Modern Art of Australia. The exhibition was well-funded and unusually for the time toured to every state (where it was shown in commercial galleries), as well as to regional galleries in Newcastle, Launceston and Mildura. John Reed wrote in the exhibition catalogue that 'many artists, including Albert Tucker, have felt obliged to leave Australia because of lack of recognition, so it is with special pleasure that we welcome him back as our distinguished guest. Albert Tucker's international reputation precedes him on this visit; but we can now for the first time see the paintings on which this reputation has





Albert Tucker
Card Players, 1972
oil on composition board
77.5 x 92.0 cm
Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne

been established.'[4] Tucker had returned to Australia after his recent success in New York with his head held high and this exhibition brought due acknowledgment of his work in his own country, with paintings being purchased by private collectors and public galleries including the Art Gallery of New South Wales, as well as a feature article being published in Sydney's *Daily Telegraph*.

For some years Tucker's imagery had increasingly focussed on Australian themes, subjects drawn from the country's unique history – convicts, bushrangers, explorers – and others based on its distinctive landscape. The theme of the figure in the landscape had first become evident in the Ned Kelly series of the mid-1950s, and by the time Tucker began painting his iconic antipodean heads towards the end of the decade, the figure had transformed and become the landscape. 'I'd been away long enough to be suffering acute bouts of nostalgia and I was getting all these memory images of Australia – and oddly enough not so much specific imagery, but in images of texture and colour and light and all that kind of thing that's very Australian, very rough textures.'[5] His longstanding friendship with fellow artist Sidney Nolan, whose work had consistently addressed such themes with considerable critical and commercial success, must have influenced this development but so too did something more fundamental. Over time Tucker recognised that although he was living in sophisticated cultures with firsthand access to masterpieces of the Western art tradition, he was always at one remove from his surroundings. Despite the philistinism and stunted appreciation of true art and creativity that Tucker perceived in Australia, he was at home in this country, part of a community (no matter how much of an outsider he may have felt) and possessed an innate understanding of his environment. It took at least a decade of being away from the country of his birth for Tucker to come to terms with this and see Australia in a positive light and as a place that could both inspire and sustain a serious career.

Painted over an extended period of five years, *The Card Players*, 1968 – 73, is indicative of Tucker's method of getting the essence of an image down on to the canvas and coming back to it months, or even years later, at a time when he could 'see the solution and get the final equilibrium.'[6] Talking about his studio practice, Tucker described the process of 'thrash[ing] around wildly and usually get[ting] three quarters of the painting done' that often characterised the first phase of a new painting. This energy and creative struggle were later replaced by a sense of calm which oversaw the completion of the work: 'I never have any trouble in being instantly back in time. It is as though I can slide back and pick up where I left off… It is a feeling of plugging in, back in time, with the sense that I am in fact there with all the appropriate sensations.'[7]

Albert Tucker, Melbourne, 1961
photographer unknown
Art Gallery of New South Wales archive, Sydney

With their sharp, angular features, the stern faces of Tucker's card players draw directly on the antipodean heads which first emerged in the late 1950s. While these heads were based on the shape of an Etruscan double headed axe, here – more naturalistic and adorned with crumpled, well-worn hats – they are transported to a setting that is instantly recognisable as the Australian outback. The bare lightbulb, its zigzag filament surrounded by an orange glow, highlights the rugged sparseness of the scene, as well as recalling familiar imagery from earlier in Tucker's career, the distinctive yellow lights that illuminated nocturnal wartime streets in the *Image of Modern Evil* series. The unsettling atmosphere of those 1940s images is also keenly felt here. The fusion of man and his environment and the inevitable tensions within this relationship was a central theme of Tucker's oeuvre, and it is highlighted here by the skin of the figures – the colour and texture of dry earth – and the green veins which cover their arms, 'representing the vital life force… like watercourses in the dry desert.'[8] Playing a game of cards, Tucker's figures suggest a metaphorical competition with fate, a reference to early explorers and symbolic, perhaps, of man's constant struggle with the environment.

1. Mollison, J., and Bonham, N., *Albert Tucker*, Macmillan, South Melbourne, 1982, p. 42
2. Gavin Fry, *Albert Tucker*, The Beagle Press, Sydney, 2005, p. 212
3. See Fry, ibid., p. 159
4. Ibid., p. 18
5. Harding, L., *Hinterlands: Albert Tucker's Landscape*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Bulleen, 2008, p. 31
6. Mollison and Bonham, op. cit., p. 63
7. Ibid.
8. *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, National Australia Bank, Melbourne, 1982, collection notes by Robert Lindsay, p. 108

KIRSTY GRANT

LEONARD FRENCH

25

(1928 – 2017)
BEFORE THE FIRE, 1974 – 78
from the FIRE AND RAIN series
synthetic polymer paint and enamel on hessian on board
122.0 x 137.0 cm
signed lower right: French
inscribed with title and date on label verso:
FIRE AND RAIN SERIES 1974 – 78 / Before the Fire

ESTIMATE: $25,000 – 35,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1978 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Probably: *Leonard French: Fire and Rain 1974 – 1978*, Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, 14 October – 8 November 1978
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 12
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 9
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 12; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Cohn, A., 'Leonard French at 50', *The Australian Jewish Times*, Sydney, 2 November 1978, p. 14
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 39, p. 52 (illus.)
Millar, R., 'A Confident 10 Years', *The Herald*, Melbourne, 21 October 1982, p. 37 (illus.)
Hart, D., *William Delafield Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 119

Famously describing himself as a 'dog among the fairies'[1], Leonard French is renowned as one of the most idiosyncratic talents in Australian art. Having trained as a signwriter while pursuing part-time art classes, he was initially taken under the wing of Melbourne Technical College lecturer, Victor Greenhalgh, who identified his prodigious talent and later gave French a teaching position. French became further captivated by the Melbourne art scene when he frequented after classes the Swanston Family Hotel in Swanston Street, an establishment also patronised by numerous emerging Antipodean artists including Arthur Boyd, John Perceval, Clifton Pugh, Charles Blackman and John Olsen. The combination of his teaching and signwriting studies, together with regular debates among his artistic peers at the Swanston Family Hotel (such congregations were later known as 'Len French's University'[2]), enabled French's burgeoning artistic vision to solidify and, from the late 1950s, French's ascent was meteoric, winning in quick succession the Crouch, Perth, Peace Congress, Sulman and Blake prizes – the latter of which he won a second time in 1980. Arguably most significant among his achievements, however, remains the iconic stained-glass ceiling commission for the Great Hall of the National Gallery of Victoria awarded to French in 1963 – a majestic and monumental undertaking that secured his critical reputation as one of the most important Australian artists of his day.

Having thus forged his own path from relative obscurity to astonishing popularity through his unique modernist style that encapsulated a deep humanism and spirituality – notwithstanding the dominant abstraction aesthetic of the time – during the 1970s French would delve more fully into the figurative idioms that today define his oeuvre. Between 1974 and 1978 in particular, he completed his 'Fire and Rain' series which, comprising fifteen works including the present, was exhibited to widespread acclaim in Sydney, Adelaide and Melbourne in 1978. Counterbalancing the dark allegories of death and captivity explored in his preceding series 'Death of a Revolution' created following the artist's travels to South America earlier in the decade, such 'Fire and Rain' works were notably lighter in feeling and tone, lthough still employed a similar Christian-Byzantine symbolism to evoke connotations of war and social revolution. Accordingly, in *Before the Fire,* 1974 – 78, fire embodies for French a spiritual force, both capable of destroying corruption and encapsulating the vitality of the human spirit; the trees further reinforce this analogy, signifying the human figure, before subsequently evolving into cruciform motifs that allude to the three crosses of Golgotha, while rain, the second element in the series, here serves as a symbol of regeneration. As French reflects, 'I set out with just trees and end up with crucifixes. There are several stages however, between the cosy arrangement of burning logs and the final crucifixion picture… the fire is a spiritual thing.'[3]

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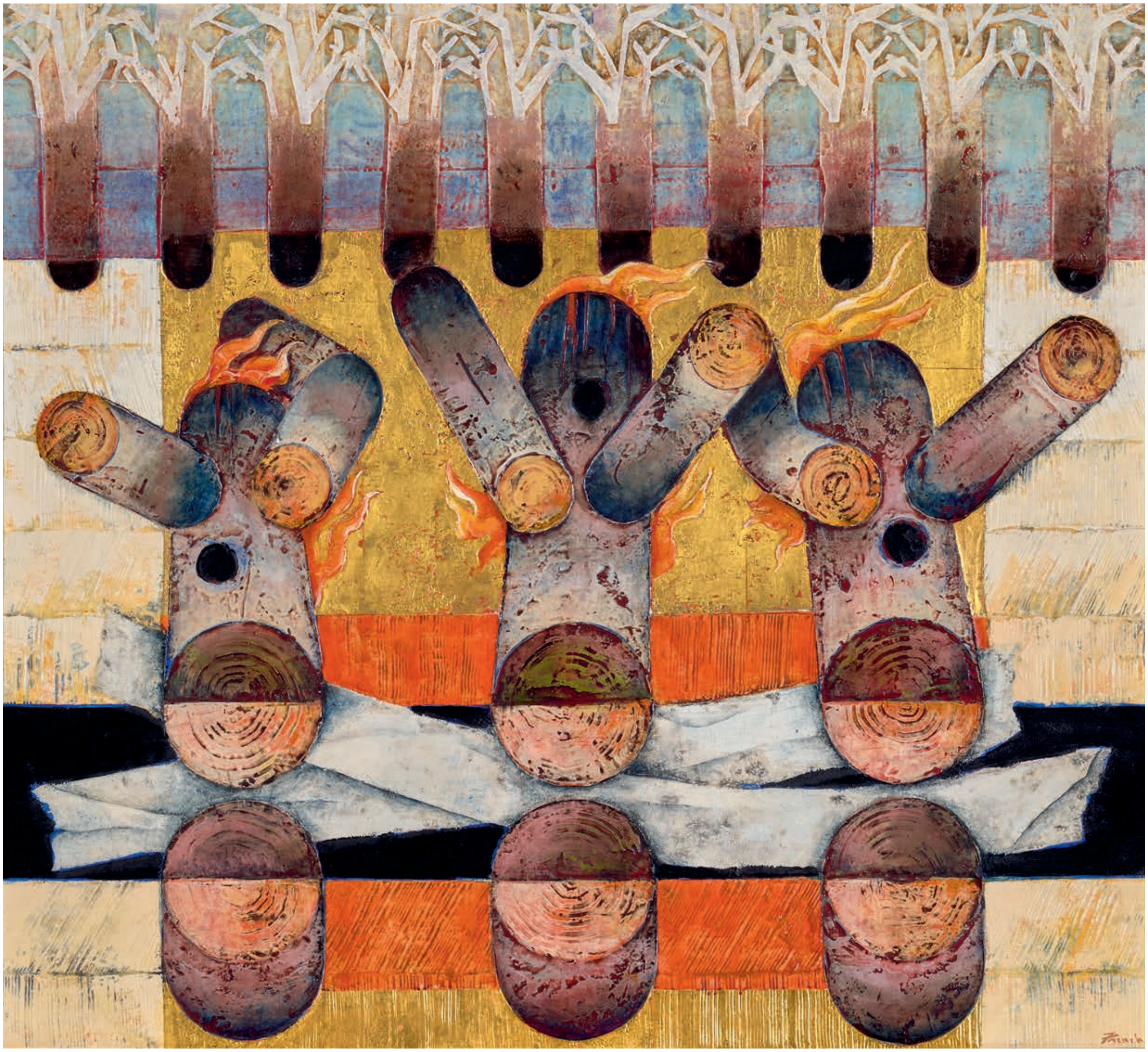
1. 'Leonard French, a man apart', *Weekend Australian*, 18 – 19 April 1981
2. Heathcote, C., *A Quiet Revolution: the rise of Australian art 1946 – 1968*, Text Publishing, Melbourne, 1995, p. 63
3. French, quoted in an interview with Sandra McGrath, 'An Artist's Logbook', *The Australian*, 7 March 1978, n.p.

VERONICA ANGELATOS



ARTHUR BOYD

26

(1920 – 1999)
SHOALHAVEN CLIFF AND RIVER, 1994
oil on canvas
152.5 x 122.0 cm
signed lower right: arthur Boyd
inscribed with title and date on gallery label attached verso

ESTIMATE: $100,000 – 150,000

PROVENANCE

Australian Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in August 1994 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Arthur Boyd, Australian Galleries, Melbourne, April – May 1994, cat. 20 (illus. in exhibition catalogue, p. 33)

'The natural beauty of the Shoalhaven area caused Boyd to marvel constantly. His paintings are a celebration of grandeur and wonder of Nature. It is to Boyd's credit that a single landscape can inspire such diversity of work. He gives us the impression that there are infinite possibilities, as long as we train ourselves to see.'[1]

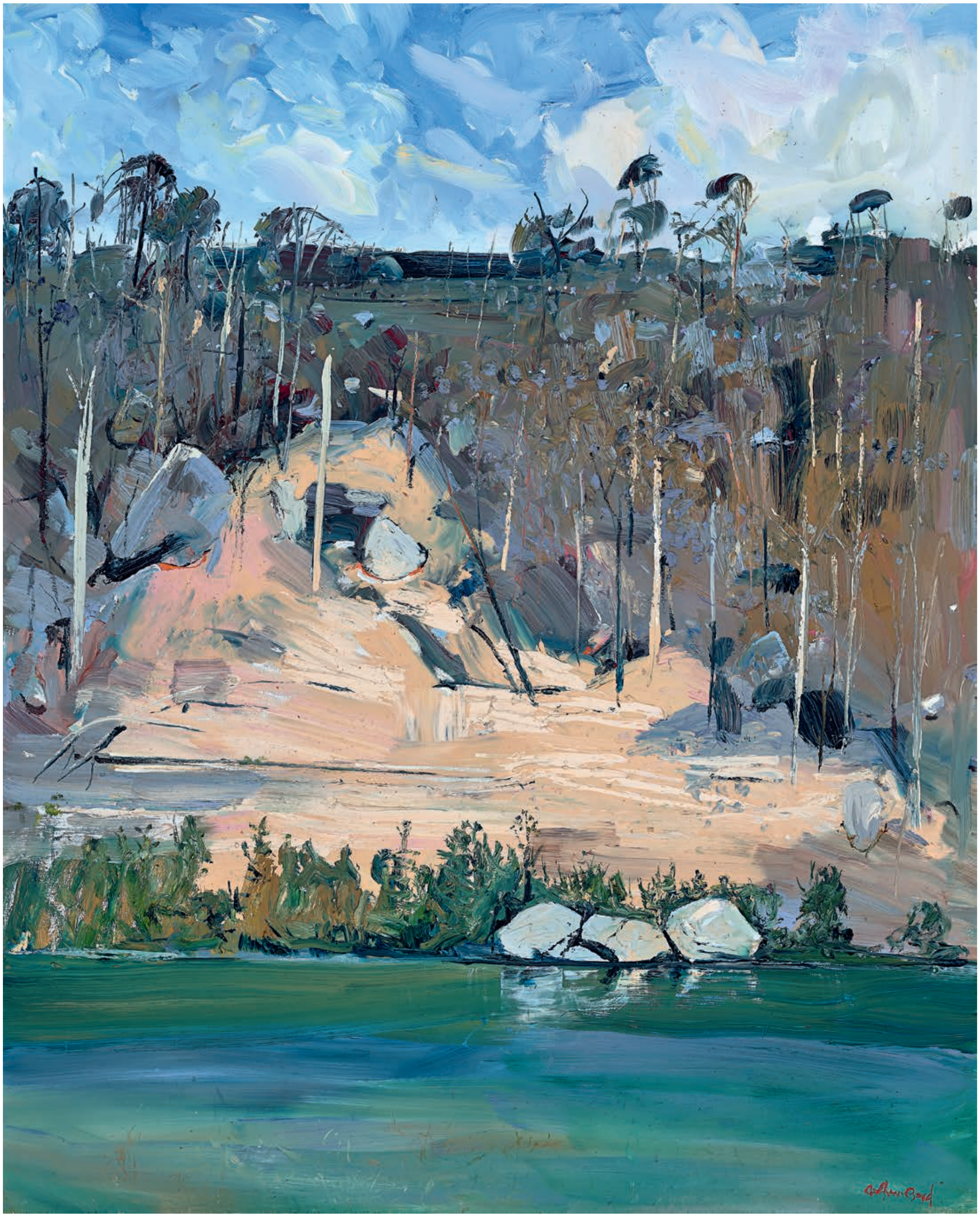
Eager to rediscover his roots, his 'Australianism', after more than a decade abroad, in 1971 Arthur Boyd returned to the country of his birth to take up a Creative Arts Fellowship at the Australian National University in Canberra. Over the blazing summer of 1971 – 72, Boyd and his wife Yvonne were invited by the Sydney art dealer Frank McDonald to visit Bundanon for the weekend, staying at a home he shared on the south coast of New South Wales with art historian Sandra McGrath and her husband Tony. Here the artist's joyful rediscovery of the Australian bush with its stark contrasts and clarity of light was nothing short of an epiphany, and thus in 1974, Boyd purchased the nearby property Riversdale on the banks of the Shoalhaven River. Once again the magic of the untamed Australian landscape became the impetus for his art, and over the subsequent twenty-five years until his death in 1999, Boyd would dedicate himself almost exclusively to capturing the myriad moods of the Shoalhaven in images that are today imprinted upon the national psyche as some of our most beloved and iconic.

Soul-piercing in its beauty, the Shoalhaven region offered both refreshing solace for the artist's world-weary eyes, and endless potential as a subject – 'the variation in the area with its great deep tones and high keys' bearing strong affinities with music. As Boyd elaborated, 'in the desert there is only one note, just one low singing note. In this landscape the tonal range – not tonal in the obvious sense of colour, but the actual fact of the horizon which can vary from very high to low to infinite, depending on your line of vision – makes it a greater challenge. It has a knife-edged clarity. Impressionism could never have been born here, but Wagner could easily have composed here. He could not have composed at Port Phillip Bay. In fact,' he added with characteristic playfulness, 'I actually think Wagner lived in the Shoalhaven.'[2] Wild and primordial, the region differed completely from the ordered English countryside to which he had grown accustomed and thus, a new vision was required to unlock its tangled mysteries. If previously Breughel and Rembrandt had offered inspiration, now Von Guérard, Piguenit and Buvelot became Boyd's spiritual mentors; as he mused, 'I see the landscape looking very much like a Von Guérard, much more than the look of the Australian Impressionist school. In this area you are aware again and again how those old boys got it right all the time'.[3]

Suffused with warmth and lyricism, *Shoalhaven Cliff and River*, 1994 is a monumental example of the 'pure' Shoalhaven landscapes which – devoid of the mythological creatures and symbolic narrative punctuating versions elsewhere – simply pays homage to the sheer beauty, grandeur and wonder of Nature. Indeed, the work is a poignant reminder of how Boyd, comfortable once more with the eternal diversity of the Australian landscape, ultimately *did* tame his wilderness – '... what was unfamiliar became familiar, what was menacing became friendly, what was awesome became intimate'.[4]

1. McKenzie, J., *Arthur Boyd at Bundanon*, Academy Editions, London, 1994, p. 42
2. Boyd quoted in Pearce, B., *Arthur Boyd Retrospective*, exhibition catalogue, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 1993, pp. 26 – 27
3. Boyd quoted in McGrath, S., *The Artist and the Shoalhaven*, Bay Books, Sydney, 1982, p. 220
4. McGrath, ibid., p. 79

VERONICA ANGELATOS



ARTHUR BOYD

27

(1920 – 1999)
SUFFOLK LANDSCAPE, FIGURE AND BOOK, 1973
oil on canvas
151.5 x 121.5 cm
signed lower right: Arthur Boyd

ESTIMATE: $40,000 – 60,000

PROVENANCE

Fischer Fine Art, London
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Arthur Boyd: Recent Paintings, Fischer Fine Art, London, May – June 1973, cat. 25 (illus. in exhibition catalogue, p. 13)
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982

LITERATURE

Ford, B. (ed.), *The Cambridge Cultural History of Britain*, Vol. 9: Modern Britain, Cambridge University Press, London, 1992, p. 110
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 14, p. 27 (illus.)

RELATED WORK

Suffolk landscape, figure and book, 1973 – 74, oil on canvas, 315.0 x 434.2 cm, in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Suffolk landscape, figure and book, 1973, belongs to an extraordinary series painted by Arthur Boyd after he returned from his first visit to Australia in more than a decade. Having been awarded a Creative Arts Fellowship at the Australian National University in Canberra, he arrived to find himself dazzled again by the bright Australian light during the blazing summer of 1971 – 1972, leading him to question his connection to his homeland as well as his true intentions as an artist. By this time, he had been living in England since 1959, and had studios in London and in Suffolk, where 'his studio window opened on to a copse of spruce, larch and other trees'[1]; it was within this quintessential English setting that he began his personal interrogation.

Boyd remains one of this country's leading landscape artists and this is largely because of his individualistic identification with this motif, whether during his teenage years painting alongside his grandfather on the bucolic Mornington peninsula, or conversely, in the tangled primeval forests he depicted from the late 1940s. Boyd enjoyed great success in London following a huge retrospective of his work mounted by the Whitechapel Gallery in in 1962; and by 1973, when *Suffolk landscape, figure and book* was painted, a new Boyd exhibition was a major event on the British art calendar. For his show that year, Fischer Fine Art responded to the occasion with a richly illustrated catalogue, and of particular note is the chronological format of the publication, which allows the reader to follow the artist's trajectory of thought and divergent inspirations.

The sequence starts gently with *Suffolk landscape with gate*, 1973, which mirrors the stillness of the artist's Wimmera paintings of the 1950s, whilst the following works feature a nude model (Boyd's wife Yvonne) sitting quietly by a stream in the forest next to the studio. At first, she is reading but suddenly, the book is discarded and she confronts the viewer with a candid stare in a pose recalling Boyd's previous paintings of Susannah and the Elders. In the next work, *Suffolk pine forest and book*, 1973, the nude has departed the scene but her discarded book 'lies open, almost readable to the viewer emphasising the strong influence of literary tradition and inspiration within English art.'[2] Disquiet also enters the frame through the impasto treatment of the sky, and indeed, a storm appears to be brewing, indicative of the artist's mind as Boyd begins to consider his role and antagonistic fate as an artist. In the work on offer here, *Suffolk landscape, figure and book*, a distinct spikiness now infests the forest, with broken branches and pine needles scattered over the scene like thorns, while in the foreground stands the fugitive figure of the artist himself as he attempts to realise his vision, no doubt aware of the turbulent sky, cloud riven and intense. This is the last moment of relative peace in the sequence before Boyd's creative demons arrive, a process charted over successive paintings where the storm has passed but left in its wake a brutal transformation in the now helpless artist – adrift in the wild, with a muzzled dog mounted on his crouching back.

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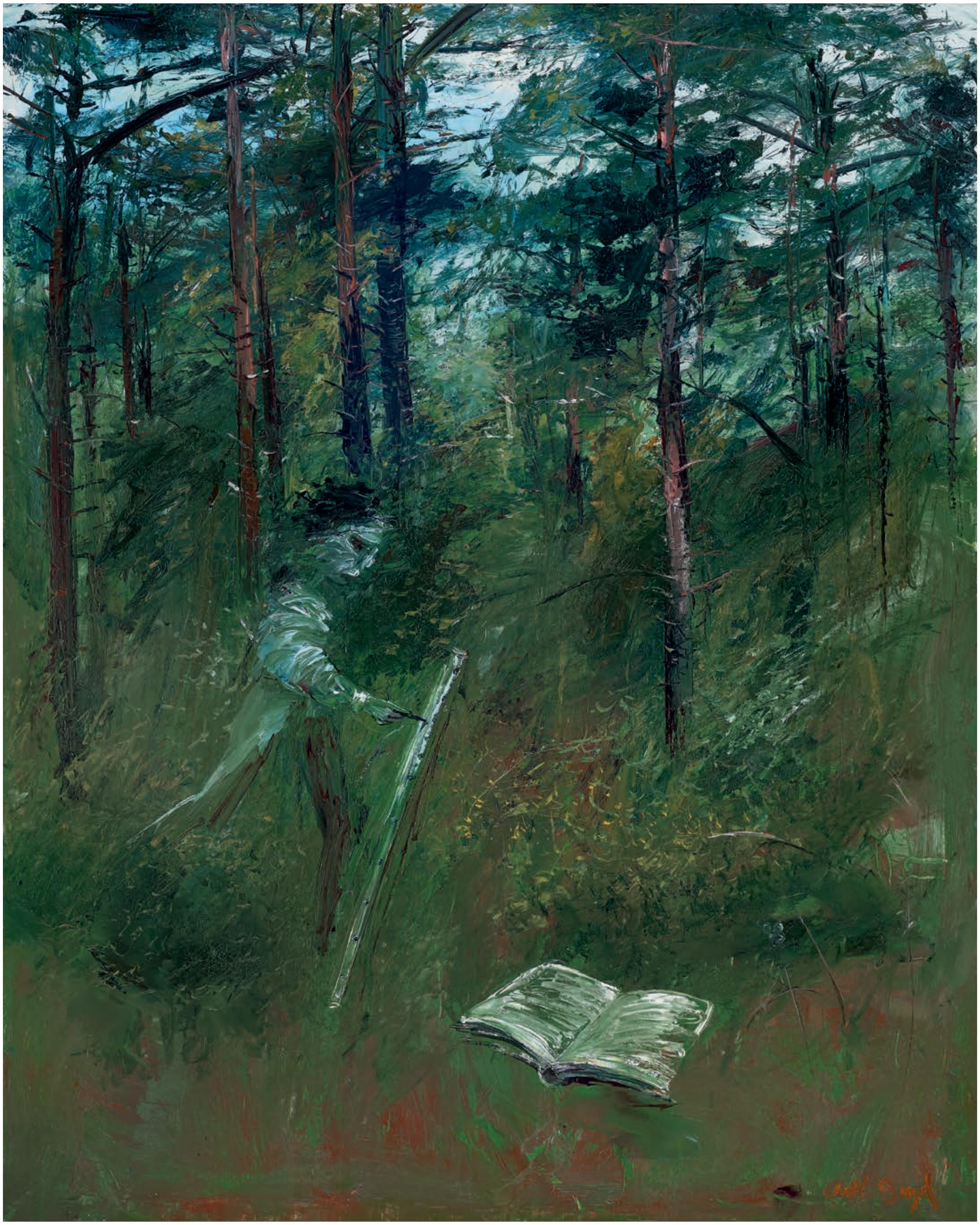
1. Hoff, U., *The Art of Arthur Boyd*, Andre Deutsch, London, 1986, p.65
2. Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of The National Australia Bank Art Collection*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 27

ANDREW GAYNOR



LLOYD REES

28

(1895 – 1988)
SYDNEY HARBOUR, LANE COVE, 1978 – 79
oil on canvas on composition board
78.0 x 93.5 cm
signed and dated lower left: L REES / 78 – 79

ESTIMATE: $65,000 – 85,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in June 1980 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 77, p. 90 (illus.)
Best Loved Poems and Stories of the Australian People, Weldon Publishing, Sydney, 1988 (illus.)

For many years, Lloyd Rees rightfully held the position of the grand old man of Australian art, his eminence still felt today in the treasures he bequeathed to all. Inspired throughout his life by the genius of J.M.W. Turner, in his later years he rose out of the solid form and superb draughtsmanship of his earlier years to create visionary paintings full of luminosity. Rees's *Sydney Harbour, Lane Cove* 1978 – 79 is an essay about light, ennobled by the vision that comes with age following a lifetime of achievement. 'If there is one thing I want now', he once said, 'is for my paintings to be light right through'. Referring to the Impressionists and the great fresco painters of Italy and 'the sense of the painting being on a light background', he added 'This is what I am trying to do here, to make the lightness of the canvas the dominating thing'.[1]

All of Rees' later paintings celebrate light in both technique and subject whether they be of sunlit Sydney or the twilight moments of Hobart. Water often plays a prominent part, graced by the white sails of yachts, as in *Dusk on the Derwent, Tasmania*, 1985 or *The Waterfall, Tasmania*, 1982, in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney. The time of day likewise plays a significant role, not only in the changing appearances from dawn, through noon to dusk, but also metaphorically. Like the ages of man, the sun rising speaks of the beginning, noon the height, and the afternoon into twilight, of maturity into the tranquillity and richer perceptions of the sage. *Sydney Harbour, Lane Cove* 1978 – 79 was painted when Rees was around eighty-three years old. In its light-drenched panorama of Sydney Harbour, complete with white sails and those looking on, it combines notions of youth, the new day and new life (the sun rises in the east), bathed in that poeticism that distinguishes Rees's late work. Everything is enveloped in a golden haze of optimism. It resonates with yellow, the colour of the sun and life, and dissolves into the visionary with a touch of the heroic. Of the spiritual in the material, nobility of perception combines with the sensuous appeal of paint and lively strokes of the brush, as does form with light. The softness of definition, almost diaphanous, not only embraces the miracle of light and its beauty, but also evokes an atmosphere of embracing calm and enlightenment. It touches upon the transcendental, recalling the great masters, especially Claude Monet at Giverny, expressing the harmony of all things – perceptions of infinity through the everyday.

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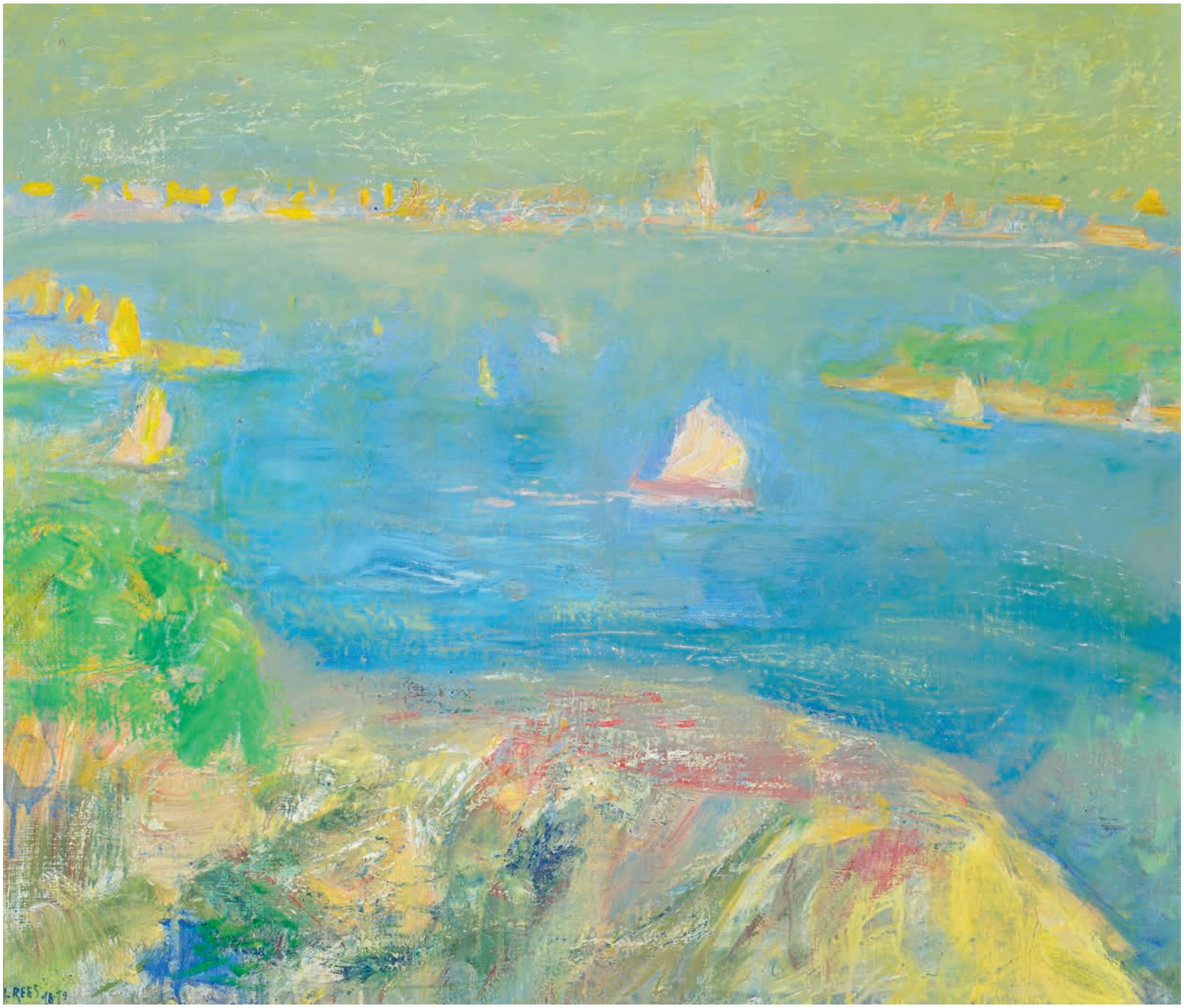
1. Lloyd Rees, Age, 1982, quoted in Pearce, B., *Australian Art in the Art Gallery of New South Wales*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2000, p. 287

DAVID THOMAS


L.REES 18-79

JOHN PERCEVAL

29

(1923 – 2000)
HAYSTACKS, 1972
oil on canvas
96.0 x 119.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: '72 / Perceval
bears inscription verso: Haystacks

ESTIMATE: $65,000 – 85,000

PROVENANCE

South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne
Barry Stern Gallery, Sydney, January 1980
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1981 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

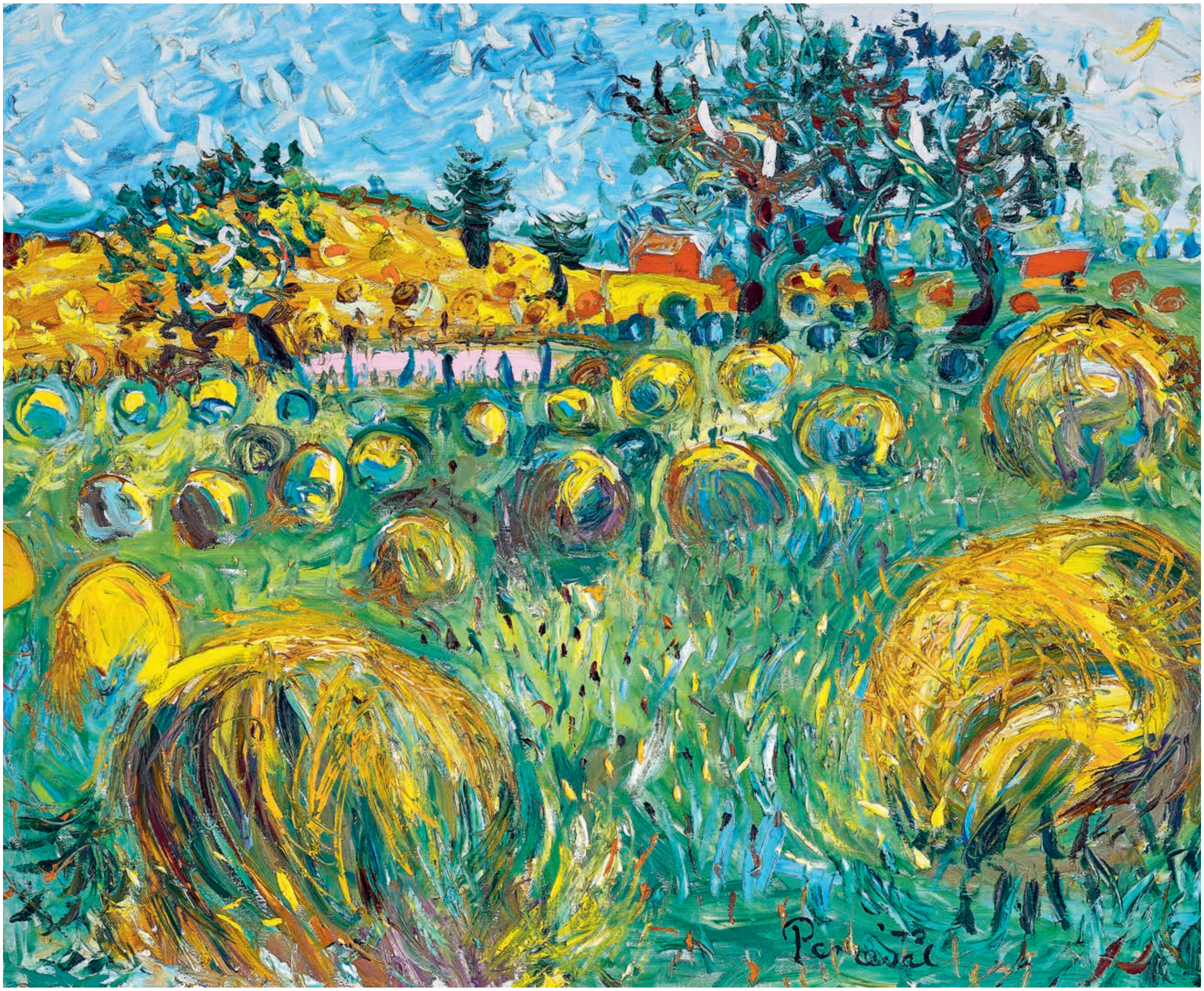
Recent Works by John Perceval, South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne, 17 October 1972, cat. 2 (illus. front cover of exhibition catalogue)
John Perceval, South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne, 20 February 1976
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Collection of Modern Art in the Seventies, Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Victoria, 9 May – 2 June 1985
Australian Pavilion at the World Expo '88, Australian Pavilion, Brisbane, 7 April – 4 November 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 28 (illus. exhibition catalogue cover)
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 22 (illus. exhibition catalogue cover); and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990
John Perceval: A Retrospective Exhibition, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 30 April – 12 July 1992, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 6 August – 20 September 1992 (label attached verso)

LITERATURE

Art and Australia, Ure Smith, Sydney, vol. 10, no. 1, July 1972, p. 11 (illus., as 'Haystacks Near Berwick')
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 73, p. 86 (illus.)
'Insight into Recent Art', *The Express*, Victoria, 2 May 1985, p. 12
'First Public Display in Sydney of National's Paintings' *The University of Sydney News*, Sydney, vol. 21, no. 20, 1 August 1989, p. 170 (illus.)
Fenner, F., 'The Good Life: Paintings lost in the 70s', *Tamworth Daily Leader*, New South Wales, 1 June 1990
Fischbein, J., 'Saluting the Seventies', *Look*, Sydney, July 1990, p. 16 (illus.)
Allen, T., *John Perceval*, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1992, p. 171

RELATED WORK

Haystacks, 1975, Aubusson tapestry, 160.0 x 195.0 cm, location unknown, illus. in *Art and Australia*, Ure Smith, Sydney, vol. 13, no. 2, October – December 1975, p. 126



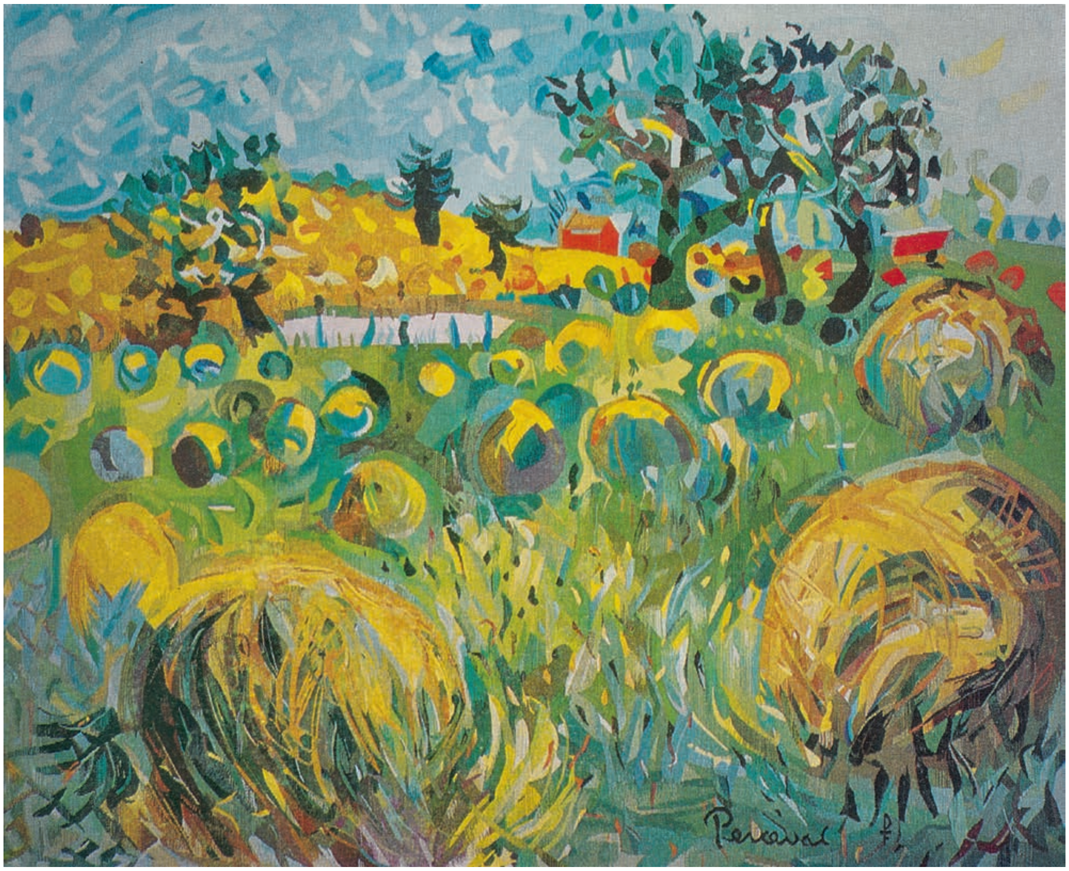
In the early 1970s, John Perceval undertook a large cycle of paintings that revisited memories from his childhood. He had adopted a similar approach earlier in the 1940s, in a sequence of haunting works unavoidably affected by the psychological effect of the Second World War. By comparison, the later images are more joyous and a list of works from 1971 – 72 reveal some eighteen paintings with the word 'wheatfield' in the title. Perceval had a fractured childhood due to his parents' divorce and his affliction with polio at age fifteen but until the age of eleven, he lived with his father who ran 'a six-thousand-acre wheat and sheep farm in the shire of Merredin, two hundred and twenty kilometres east of Perth. The nearest town, Merredin itself, was small and remote, with one main road. Horses and carts clattered across its flatness.'[1] It is this landscape and the memories evoked which underscore *Haystacks*, 1972.

Whilst recuperating from polio, Perceval discovered the work of van Gogh, and was immediately inspired by the Dutchman's vibrant approach and evident rapport with his subjects. Perceval's mature style was equally compelling, full of rich textural brush marks and jewel-like colour, but by then he had also absorbed other ideas and inspiration, most notably through the work of Northern Renaissance artists such as Pieter Bruegel and in the ceramics he created with Arthur Boyd. By 1972, however, Perceval's years of hard living, alcohol consumption and psychiatric disorders were becoming more apparent and it would seem that this return to imagery based upon his Western Australian childhood was a dedicated attempt to restore a contemplative 'anchor' to his life.

Haystacks was exhibited at the South Yarra Gallery in Melbourne in 1972 alongside related works such as *Boy in a wheatfield* and *Farmer in a wheatfield smoking a pipe*, both from 1971. All are looser in technique than previous paintings by Perceval, evidence of the foment of ideas and memories tumbling out of his consciousness as the series progressed. He often painted *en plein air* with artists such as Fred Williams, Albert Tucker, and Clifton Pugh, who later described his colleague's technique: '[Perceval's] original layer was worked tonally with back, middle and foreground spaces, over which was placed the abstract expressionist layer of patterned impasto.'[2] This strategy is immediately apparent in *Haystacks* and the overlaying 'patterned impasto' agitates the whole surface causing the scene to oscillate in and out of focus as the eye traverses the image, particularly in the passages of wheat stalks laid bare between the rolls of baled hay. *Haystacks* obviously had an important resonance for the artist as he had it reworked into a large tapestry at the UNESCO-listed Aubusson workshops in central France in 1975.

1. Allen, T., *John Perceval*, Melbourne University Press, Victoria, 1992, pp. 5-6
2. Clifton Pugh, 1988 cited in Allen, ibid., p. 139

ANDREW GAYNOR



John Perceval
Haystacks, 1975
Aubusson tapestry
160.0 x 195.0 cm

CLIFTON PUGH

30

(1924 – 1990)
TERRITORIAL IMPERATIVE, 1979
oil and enamel on composition board
91.5 x 122.5 cm
signed lower right: Clifton
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso: "TERRITORIAL IMPERATIVE" 79 / Clifton Pugh / Hurstbridge

ESTIMATE: $18,000 – 25,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in June 1981 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Collection of Modern Art in the Seventies, Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Victoria, 9 May – 2 June 1985
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 29
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 18
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 23; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 74, p. 87 (illus.)
Sturgeon, G., *Australia: The Painter's Vision*, Bay Books, Sydney, 1988

RELATED WORK

Territorial Imperative, 1977, oil on composition board, 122.0 x 91.0 cm, private collection, illus. in Allen, T., *Patterns of Life: Clifton Pugh*, Melbourne, 1981, p. 79

In response to international art's shift away from figurative painting a gaggle of Australian artists got together in August 1959 and, after much debate around the wording, published *The Antipodean Manifesto*. The objective was to preserve and promote the values of figurative painting in Australia, against a tide of international influence. Pugh was adamant that unlike some in the group, he had nothing against abstract art, he simply believed that nonfigurative painting had it limitations in its ability to communicate. Rebutting the accusation that *The Antipodeans* were anti-art, Pugh wrote to the press to clarify his position: '…all sincere directions of Art are valid, but how far various methods go towards full expression and communication is another matter.'[1]

Territorial Imperative, 1979 is an excellent example which demonstrates Pugh's ability to fuse his draftsmanship with the expressive power of paint. In an everyday ritual, we see the two lizards twist and writhe as they seemingly fight to the death. The image of the tumbling lizards captures the moment that one dominates the other. The victor has its mouth firmly locked onto the throat of the loser as it turns belly up in defeat. The loser appears all but dead, yet as Pugh noted in a conversation with Robert Lindsay in 1981… 'it's a full fight of bluff, unlike humans they seem reluctant to kill each other.'[2] And so, once the dance is over, we have a victor while the other lives to fight another day – or more likely becomes a meal for watchful eyes. The title, *Territorial Imperative,* was also the title of another painting in 1977, which similarly features creatures asserting their right to territorial dominance. In this earlier instance, it was a classic image of magpies defending their nest in full combat mode. Significantly, both works use camouflage and violence as a secondary theme – an influence that can be attributed to observations that remained with Pugh from his time serving in New Guinea during WWII.

The ground is a rich mix of household enamel paint overlayered with healthy daubs of oil paint. The material and colours harmonise to create a cacophony of surface activity and colour. His slap-dash manner of applying paint, with its raked, worked and melded surfaces has its roots in abstract painting, while the evolving image of the lizards anchor the work in the world of figurative painting – and in a way, the territorial imperative could perhaps be read as a metaphor for the skirmish the Antipodean manifesto caused in 1959. Notwithstanding, the painting remains a classic Pugh and its genesis is squarely at the feet of the abstract art movement that The Antipodeans viewed with such suspicion.

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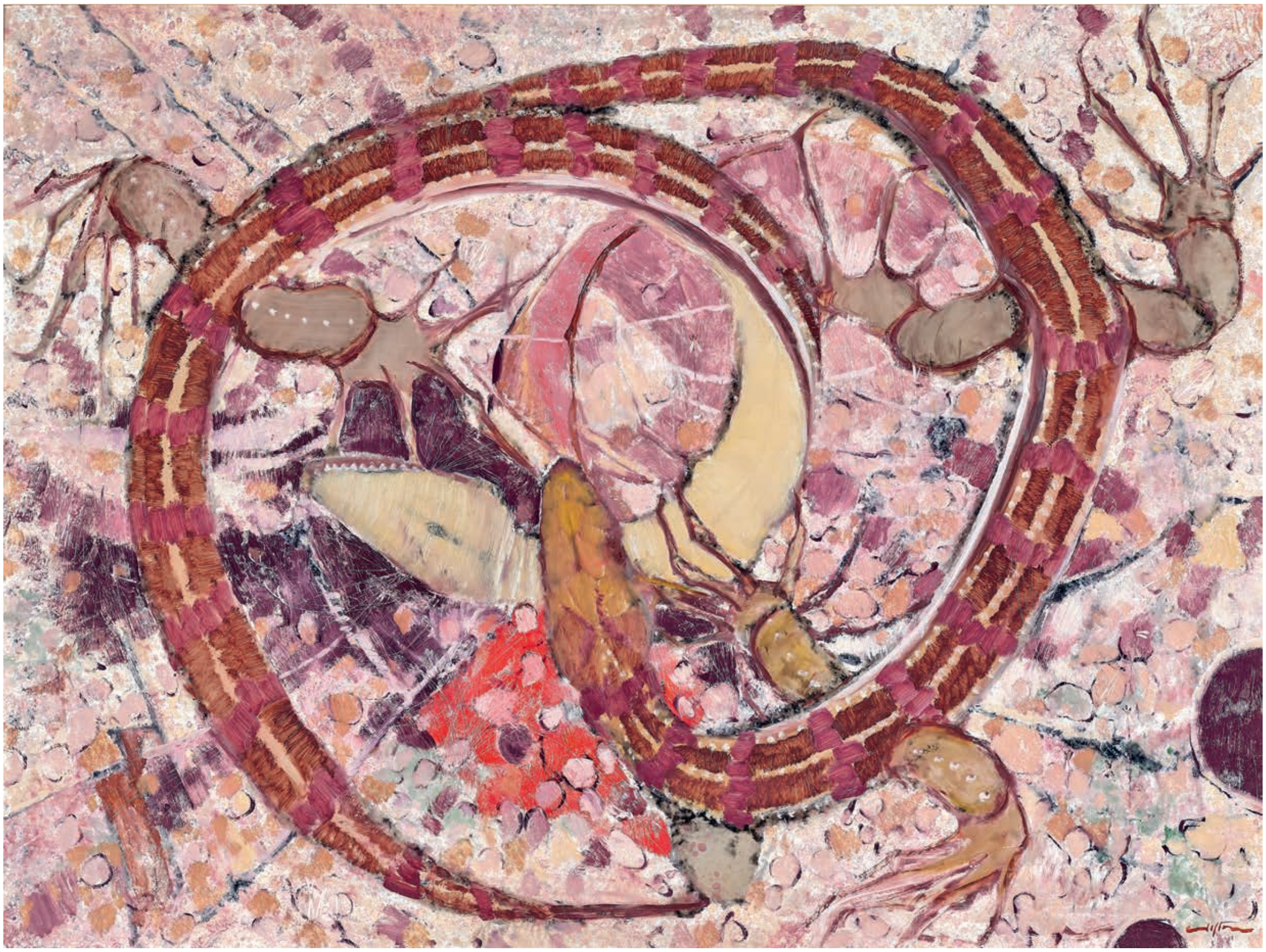
1. Pugh, C., *Contemporary Art Society Broadsheet*, August 1959
2. The artist, cited in, Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p.87

HENRY MULHOLLAND



CLIFTON PUGH

31

(1924 – 1990)
EMUS AND ANTHILLS, 1964
oil and enamel on composition board
91.0 x 122.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: Clifton / '64
inscribed with title verso: EMUS & ANT HILLS / WA

ESTIMATE: $25,000 – 35,000

PROVENANCE

The National Australia Bank Art Collection,
acquired in 1965 (label attached verso)

Clifton Pugh has long been considered one of Australia's leading painters. His broad appeal has spanned decades and his contribution to Australian portraiture was outstanding, as his three Archibald Prize winning portraits attest. As the bipartisan court painter to Canberra's colourful political classes throughout the 1960s and 70s, Pugh's portraits live large in the collective psyche of many Australians. His celebrated 1972 Archibald Prize winning portrait of The Hon. Gough Whitlam PM, is arguably one of the finest portraits painted in Australia.

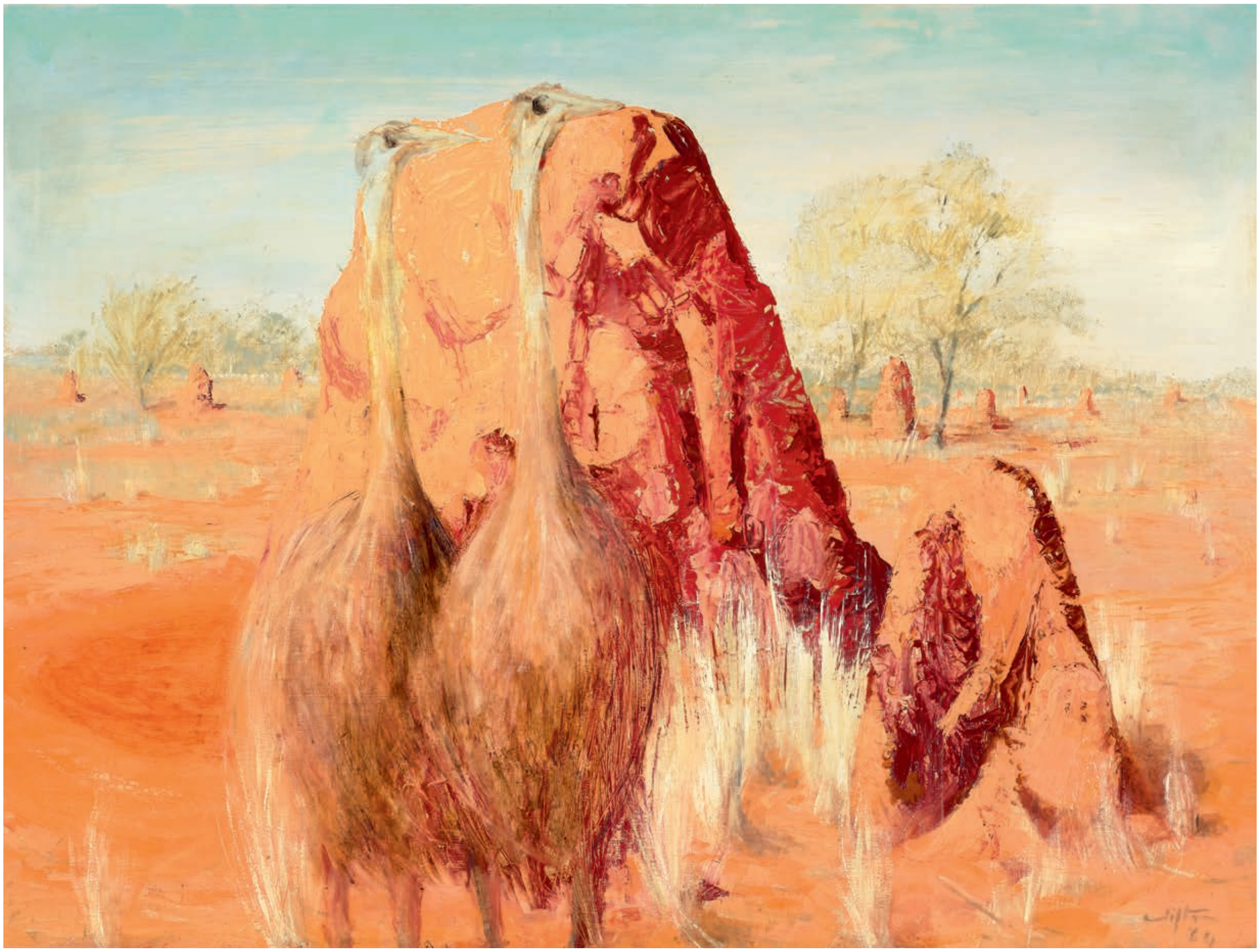
Apart from art and politics, Pugh's other great love was the environment. Clifton Pugh was an early and passionate environmentalist, and both his understanding of the landscape and love of nature underpin many of his works. Indeed, it is in the landscape that Pugh's work reaches its inventive lyrical heights, whether it be the drought-ravaged outback or the lush bush surrounds of his home at Dunmoochin, near Cottles Bridge, then on the outskirts of Melbourne.

Pugh's landscapes have a structural unity that ties the various elements together. There is a harmony between the subject and the ground, something that he also used to great effect in his portraits. In *Emus and Anthills*, 1964 the forms of the emus meld with the anthills, their shapes echoing one another. The landscape is ancient and dry. A few straggly trees provide some shade and the termites that created the anthills will provide food as a last resort, if the emus get desperate. Here depicted here as survivors shaped by millennia, these land-bound, nomadic birds are proud, wary, knowledgeable – and equipped to thrive in this harshest of environments.

Pugh was a master of all mediums and adept at combining almost any materials. Enamel house paint was a favourite, which he often used as it created a glassy ground on which the artist could manipulate oil paint to great visual effect. The end results of this combination leave the work with a fresh, spontaneous feeling, bristling with nuanced detail.

Pugh's painting trips to the outback were legendary. Tibooburra, in particular, was a destination Pugh and his friends, including Russell Drysdale, would return to time and again, and Pugh's mural of a naked Bacchus still dominates the front bar of The Family Hotel. Painter and printmaker, Max Miller, who accompanied Pugh on many painting trips enjoyed recounting the story of how Pugh, when working in the outback heat, preferred to paint while naked – with the local Indigenous community finding the sight of a white guy dressed only in a wide brimmed hat quite hilarious. *Emus and Anthills* predates these events but is born nevertheless from Pugh's love for, and understanding of, the Australian outback.

HENRY MULHOLLAND



RAY CROOKE

32

(1922 – 2015)
FIJIAN VILLAGE, c.1970
oil on composition board
76.5 x 101.5 cm
signed lower left: R Crooke

ESTIMATE: $25,000 – 35,000

PROVENANCE
The National Australia Bank Art Collection (label attached verso)

'…Crooke's paintings reveal a humility of attitude which does not seek the unusual but achieves it. If his paintings of Australia's tropical North and the native people going about their simple daily tasks or sitting as monuments in the deep shadow of their huts, spell such an enchantment, it is because poetical truth is deeper than ordinary vision.'[1]

Drawing inspiration from a lifetime of experience living in Northern Queensland and the adjacent Melanesian islands, Ray Crooke is celebrated for his quiet but intensely evocative landscapes which emphasise the monumental simplicity and laconic grace of people shaped by their environment. Whether engrossed in daily rituals, glimpsed in the cool of shaded rooms or ensnared within webs of light and shade beneath jungle vegetation, his compositions bear a strong sense of locality, describing with unprecedented accuracy this remote region and the unique light that so distinguishes it. Yet while his finished compositions such as the superb *Fijian Village* offered here appear as 'snapshots' or portraits of specific places, they are nevertheless 'the remembrance of things past', emerging from his mind's eye following the disciplined distillation of observed fact previously explored through studies and sketches. Encapsulating the artist's desire to create 'a romantic form of expression based upon imagination and emotion'[2], indeed such works give precedence to mood over action or narrative to examine, rather, the fundamental relationship between man and nature.

Fundamental to such conscious ordering of forms towards an aesthetic ideal is Crooke's enduring preoccupation with tonal relationships, contours and silhouettes, and the dramatic juxtaposition of dark against light. Indeed, despite his richly decorative and highly developed sense of colour, one only need compare such tropical landscapes with those of his artistic predecessor, Paul Gauguin, to discern 'the differences between an artist working through tone and one who worked through colour.'[3] Underpinning the strength and authenticity of his vision, thus the image here is built up from a dark ground organised around tonal relationships to reveal a carefully constructed scene, punctuated by the sudden intrusion of brilliant light. Imbuing the work with a powerful sense of mystery and curious timelessness, it is this sensation of clear defining light which gives stature to the islander women and reveals Crooke's abiding interest in the dignity of man. Betraying strong affinities with the art of Florentine Renaissance masters Giotto and Piero della Francesca in their quest to locate the eternal in the present moment – that point of intersection between time past and time to come – Crooke's meditations accordingly invite his audience to experience the art of stillness, to appreciate the flow of time in its purest, most metaphysical sense. For, as James Gleeson astutely asserts, that 'special kind of magic' in Crooke's paintings 'only begins to work when one has discovered the stillness and the silence that lies at the heart of everything he paints… This stillness is not the mere stillness of arrested motion, but the projection of a mind preoccupied with deep and permanent things.'[4]

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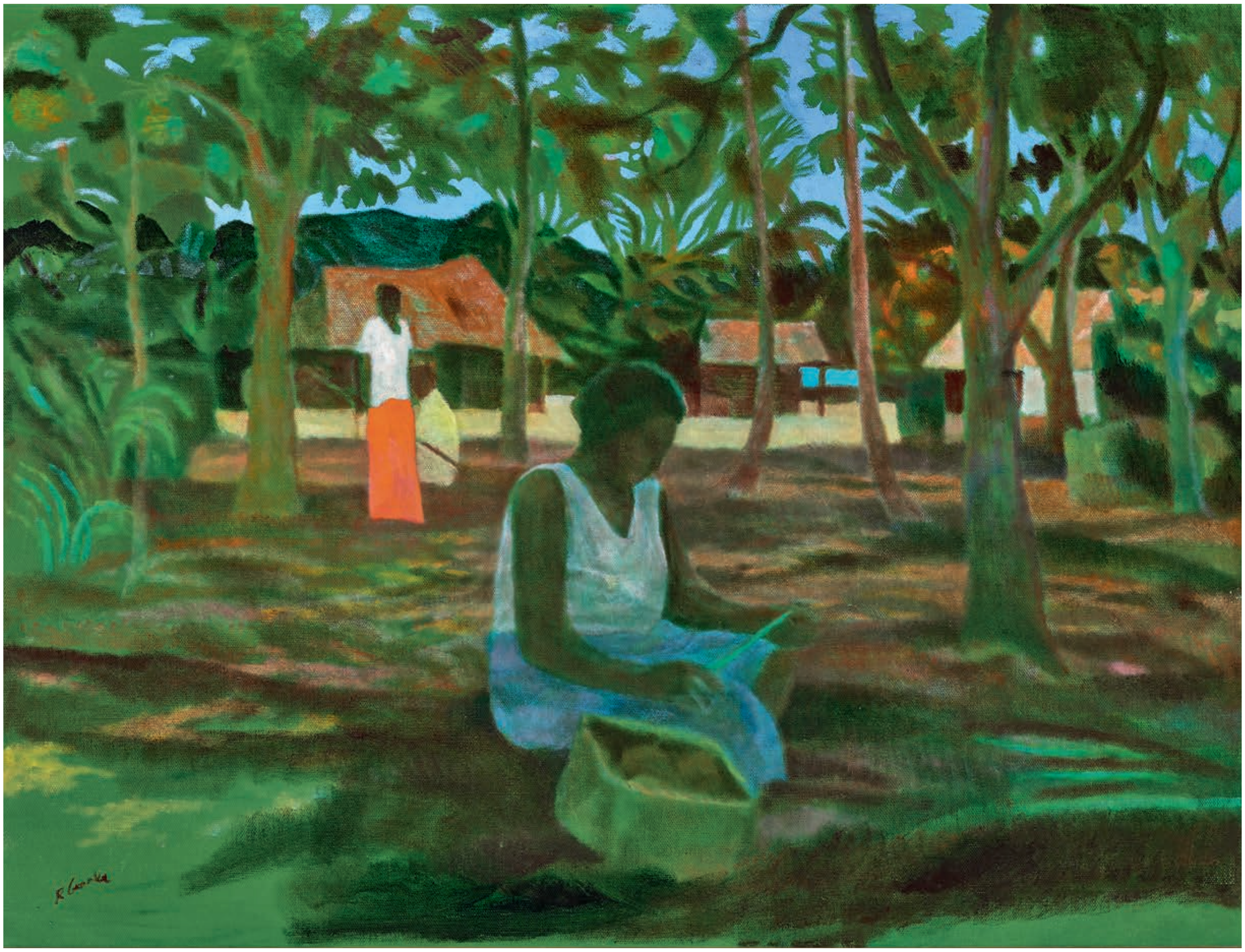
1. Langer, G., *The Courier-Mail*, Brisbane, 8 November 1967
2. Smith, S., *North of Capricorn: The Art of Ray Crooke*, Perc Tucker Regional Gallery, Townsville, 1997, p.7
3. Gleeson, J., 'Introduction', *Ray Crooke*, Collins, Sydney, 1972, n.p.
4. ibid.

VERONICA ANGELATOS



KEN WHISSON

33

born 1927
DRUMMER, c.1973
oil on composition board
85.0 x 108.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title on handwritten label verso:
KEN WHISSON / "DRUMMER" / ABOUT 1973
inscribed verso: DRUMMER ABOUT 1973 / CHERELLE /
HUTCHINSON / 66 ST ANDREWS ST / BRIGHTON
inscribed with title on frame verso: DRUMMER

ESTIMATE: $25,000 – 35,000

PROVENANCE

Cherelle Hutchinson, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in November 1978 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Possibly: *Ken Whisson*, Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane, 17 June – 6 July 1973
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Collection of Modern Art in the Seventies, Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Victoria, 9 May – 2 June 1985
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 38

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982
'Insight into Recent Art', *The Express*, Victoria, 2 May 1985, p. 12 (as 'The Drummer')

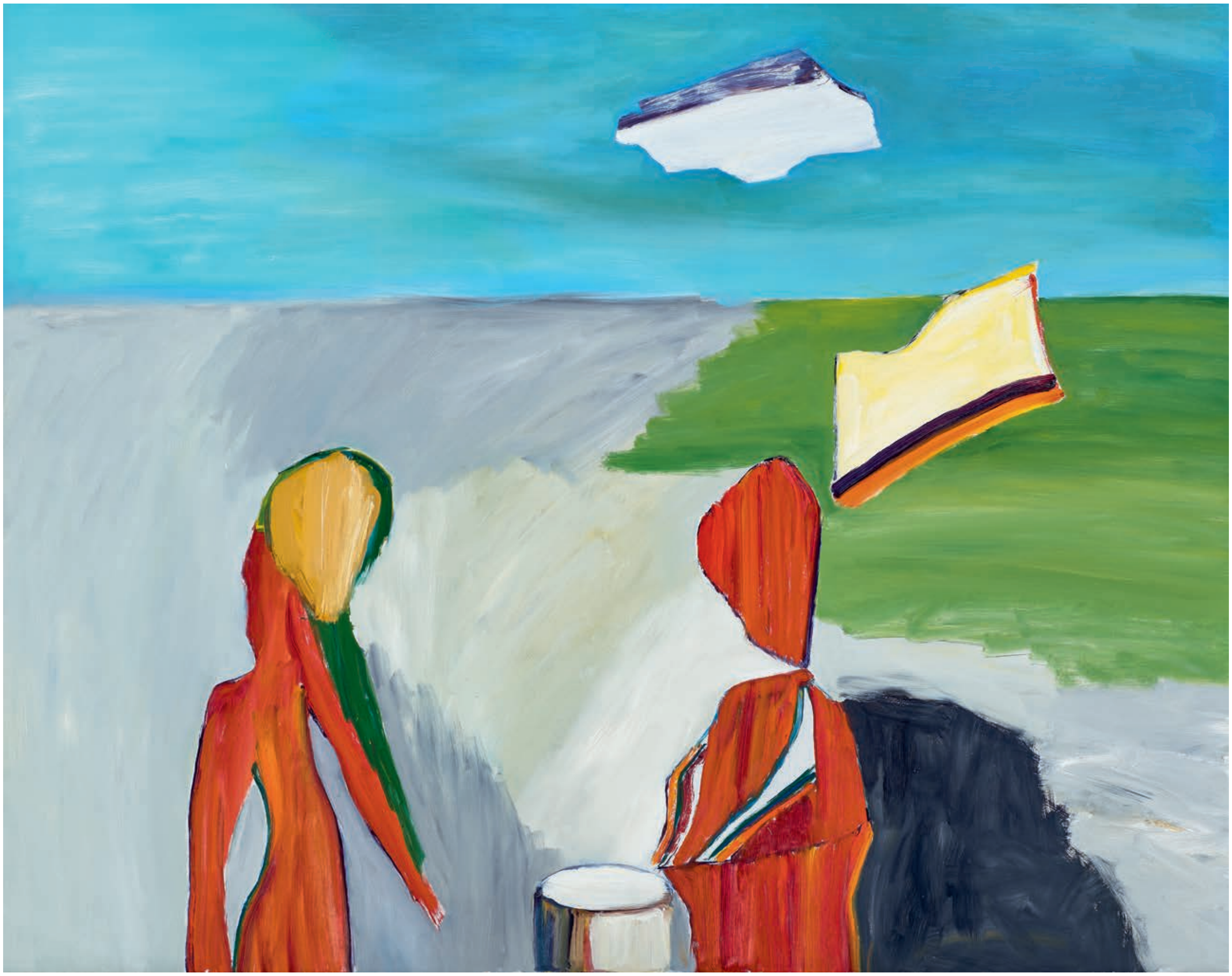
Born in Lilydale Victoria in 1927, Ken Whisson was part of a generation of artists that included Albert Tucker, Sidney Nolan, Arthur Boyd, and the European migrant Danila Vassilieff, who as his teacher, had a profound early influence on the young artist. There is an almost cult status around Ken Whisson and his work. To own a Whisson painting is to belong to a coalition of collectors that share a commitment to a form of painting that is not simply fashionable, but deeply rooted in ideas and painterly possibilities. And the more contorted and fluid his forms are, the more desirable the works become to his collectors.

By the early 1970s Ken Whisson had abandoned any obligation to painterly traditions; his paintings from this period, those on board in particular, exhibit a direct uncompromising approach which is purely intuitive. These works are defined by an absence of conventional technique, for Whisson deploys his unique home-grown techniques, while working towards an unseen and unplanned conclusion. Paradoxically, adopting this approach can be as difficult to master as the dry academic techniques so widely taught, recognised and valued as 'good painting' – which are the antitheses of Whisson's work.

Drummer, painted around 1973 when the artist was living in St Kilda, is a bright, bold example of his St Kilda period. Painted on board, these works are characterised by crisp, broken horizons and gyrating figures. These are set against slabs of landscape disrupted by angular thought balloons or images of ships that appear to have broken free and float across the surface. The current example appears as a theatrical tableau, the play between the two figures (male and female) and their place in the surrounding environment make up the work. They may represent a memory of buskers working the St Kilda promenade. The male on the right appears to be the drummer from which we get the title. As he drums the female figure gently swings along, her soft profile looking to the left as if alerted to a third party. The cylindrical form placed at the front centre of the work suggests a drum, however in the case of Whisson, a title can be misleading and the figure may or may not actually be a drummer –perhaps standing suggestively near a form such as post or bollard instead.

There is a profound clarity or purity about Whisson's paintings. Apart from several early works where the influence of Danila Vassilieff and Sidney Nolan is evident, the majority are highly original paintings. They are direct and uncompromising, composed of complex personal images which challenge the viewer to question what passes for good painting.

HENRY MULHOLLAND



JOHN OLSEN

34

born 1928
APPROACHING STORM, 1980
oil on canvas
116.5 x 122.0 cm
signed lower right: John Olsen '80
inscribed with title and date on label verso:
APPROACHING STORM (1980)

ESTIMATE: $80,000 – 120,000

PROVENANCE

Australian Galleries, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in November 1980 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

John Olsen: Exhibition of Recent Paintings, Australian Galleries, Melbourne, 27 October – 8 November 1980, cat. 4
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Collection of Modern Art in the Seventies, Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Victoria, 9 May – 2 June 1985
John Olsen – In search of the open country 1961 – 1986, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 5 August – 14 September 1986, cat. 14
Australian Pavilion at the World Expo '88, Australian Pavilion, Brisbane, 7 April – 4 November 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 26
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 16

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 68, p. 81 (illus.)
'You can Bank on this Art', *The Express*, Victoria, 7 May 1985
Palmer, M., *John Olsen – In search of the open country 1961 – 1986*, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1986, p. 13
Rooney, R., 'A landscape journey', *The Weekend Australian*, Sydney, 23 – 24 August 1986, p. 12
Duggan, L., '25 years of Olsen joy in art', *The National Times*, Sydney, 7 September 1986, p. 34
Moncrief, M., 'Recovery a fine art for NAB finance man', *The Age*, Melbourne, 2 September 2006

With a vast and varied oeuvre spanning more than seven decades, John Olsen has quite deservedly been hailed Australia's greatest living artist. From the pulsating, larrikin energy of his *You Beaut Country* series, to the quieter, more metaphysical paintings inspired by his expeditions to Lake Eyre (see lot 10), or the exquisitely lyrical works immortalising his halcyon days in Clarendon, Olsen's unique interpretations of the natural environment in its manifold moods have become indelibly etched on the national psyche, revolutionising the way in which we now perceive the Australian landscape.

Painted in 1980, *Approaching Storm* encapsulates Olsen's remarkable ability to capture both the immensity and intricacy of the Australian landscape. Employing his signature 'all-at-once', multi-perspective approach – 'I'm down on the canvas one moment and up flying the next or looking sideways or underneath'[1] – thus the work possesses a remarkable breadth and spaciousness which tangibly conveys the sight as well as the feel of this sparse terrain. Map-like, the aerial view details the solid but sinuous form of the dark green river meandering through the open desert plains, yet as the eye ascends upwards through the picture plane, it is brought back to reality by the illusion of depth suggested in the conventional horizon line and flat field of grey sky with brooding, rain-laden clouds and their shadows beyond. Even within this expansive scene however, importantly Olsen still incorporates delightful details of the local wildlife and landscape– encouraging the viewer to appreciate the relationship between the tiny and the vast, the microcosm and macrocosm in a manner reminiscent of his first responses to the area six years earlier when travelling to Lake Eyre in 1974.

Far from being a despondent image of the wild, desolate reaches of the country's interior, the present work resonates rather with a vitalistic energy – betraying a sense of not only keen observation, but joyful celebration derived from a lifetime dedicated to physical and spiritual immersion in the landscape. For ultimately, as Olsen poignantly muses, the Australian outback offered more than mere topographical phenomena to be accurately recorded. More fundamentally perhaps, the experience was the catalyst for a myriad of ideas and metaphorical connections that reaffirmed his Taoist belief in the total interconnectedness of all living forms, thereby heralding a new spirituality in his art: 'The enigma of it all. It is a desert and it can be full. After the rains, it is so incredibly abundant; so what you are looking at in one place, as if through an act of the Dao, becomes full… It has an effect on you when you are there because all the time it is impossible for you to accept fully the sense of impermanence and transitoriness… Somehow it affects you – you realise that you are looking at an *illusion* really. I don't think that there is anything more Buddhist than that'.[2]

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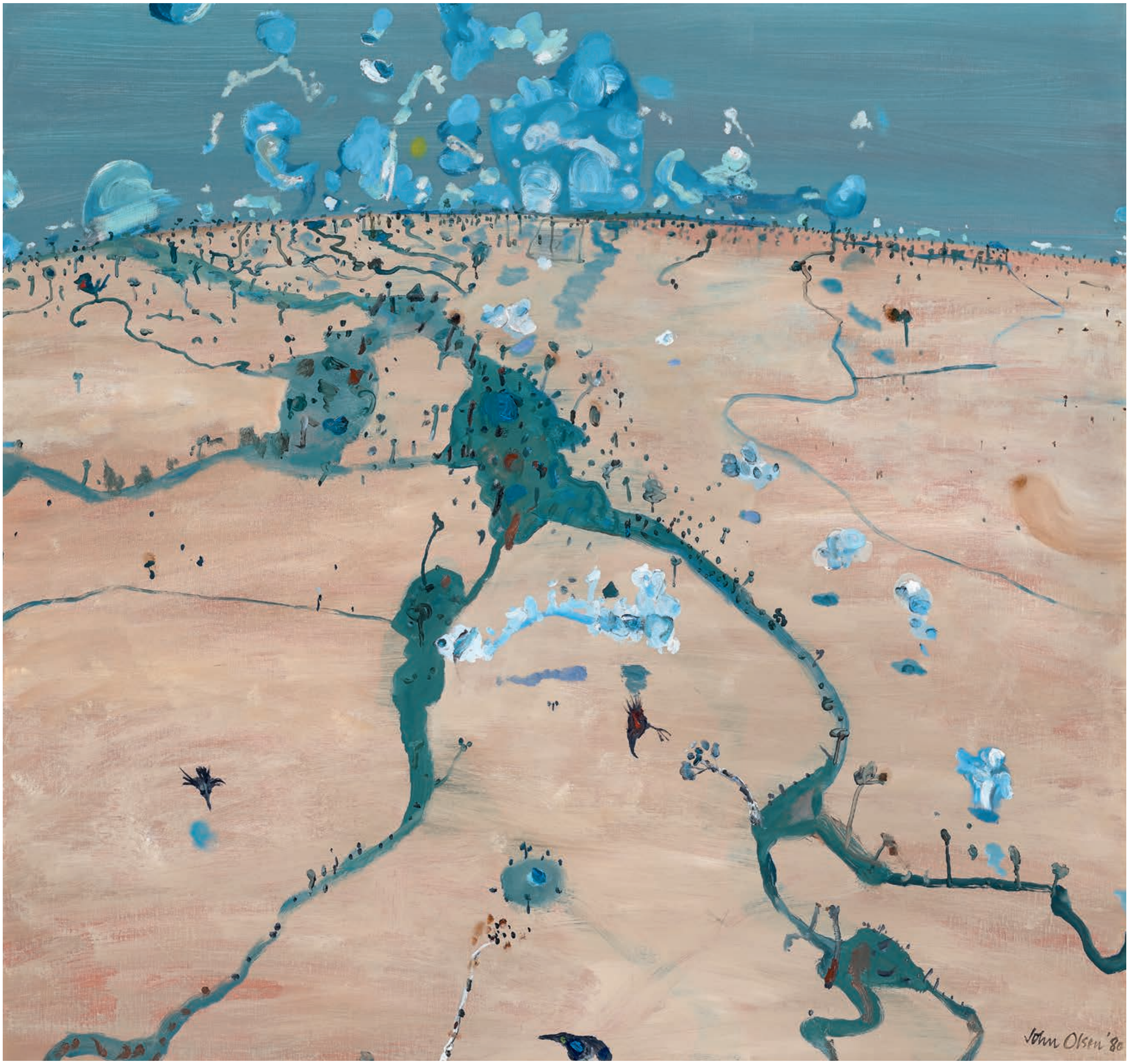
1. The artist cited in Hawley, J., 'John Olsen', *Encounters with Australian Artists,* University of Queensland Press, Queensland, 1993, p. 129
2. The artist cited in Hart, D., *John Olsen*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1991, p. 135

VERONICA ANGELATOS


John Olsen '80

ROBERT JUNIPER

35

(1929 – 2012)
GREENMOUNT HILL, 1969
oil on canvas
150.5 x 167.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: Juniper / '69
inscribed with title verso: "Greenmount Hill"

ESTIMATE: $30,000 – 40,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Skinner Galleries, Perth
The National Australia Bank Art Collection,
acquired in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Australian Pavilion at the World Expo '88, Australian Pavilion, Brisbane, 7 April – 4 November 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 21 (as 'Green Mount [sic.] Hill')
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 18; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 51, p. 64 (illus.)

RELATED WORK

Greenmount Hill, 1967, oil, synthetic polymer paint and gesso on canvas, 167.0 x 176.0 cm, in the collection of Artbank, Melbourne

The sharp and sudden incline of Greenmount Hill marks the approach to the Darling Ranges outside Perth, a geographical barrier between the coastal urban population and the endless miles of wheat fields that stretch beyond. Covered with jarrah forest, grass trees and indigenous flowering plants, it is also a short distance from Robert Juniper's house and studio in Darlington which he built from rammed earth and salvaged materials between 1958 and 1961. A number of other artists also moved to the ranges in the 1950s and 60s forming a tight, supportive and critically attuned group of practitioners. They experimented widely with materials and Juniper was particularly innovative, having trained with commercial paint products whilst completing his study at the Beckenham School of Art and Industrial Design in Kent in the 1940s. Through the use of additives such as river sand and diatomaceous earth, he sought the recreate the visceral sensation of a formative childhood experience crawling around C. Y. O'Conner's water pipe near Kalgoorlie. Here he encountered 'the impression of a bush landscape... rocks, semi-desert and the textures; trees and their greenery; associated noise of insects;'[1] and such tactile memories remain embedded in his mature paintings, such as *Greenmount Hill*, 1969.

Juniper found success early in his career by winning the inaugural Perth Prize for Contemporary Art in 1954, and through his inclusion in the landmark London exhibition *Recent Australian painting* at the Whitechapel Gallery in 1961. Three years later, his gallerist Rose Skinner organised a solo exhibition for Juniper in Tokyo and whilst he was unable to accompany that show, he travelled to Japan later in 1967, staying for an extended period absorbing the country's art. By this time, Juniper had developed an individualistic approach to his painting, using canvas stretched flat on a work bench and primed with a home-made gesso applied using a spatula, a process which allowed him to model surface textures as he went. These were further enhanced with nicks and incisions before drying, after which acrylic paint was applied to pre-moistened areas, allowing it to run and spill like watercolour. After sealing with PVA, Juniper then utilised oil paints embellished and thickened with textural additives.[2] Following his experiences in Japan, the overlaying details added to his paintings became more elegant, even decorative, and this is particularly evident in *Greenmount Hill*. With its delicate foliage contrasting the earthy base, this painting explicitly confronts Juniper's notion that having experienced the 'orderly, worked-over Japanese landscape,' he now 'longed for a bit of scruffy, dandruffy Australian bush. I'd stepped away from Australia and then suddenly saw the Australian landscape for its own unique beauty.'[3]

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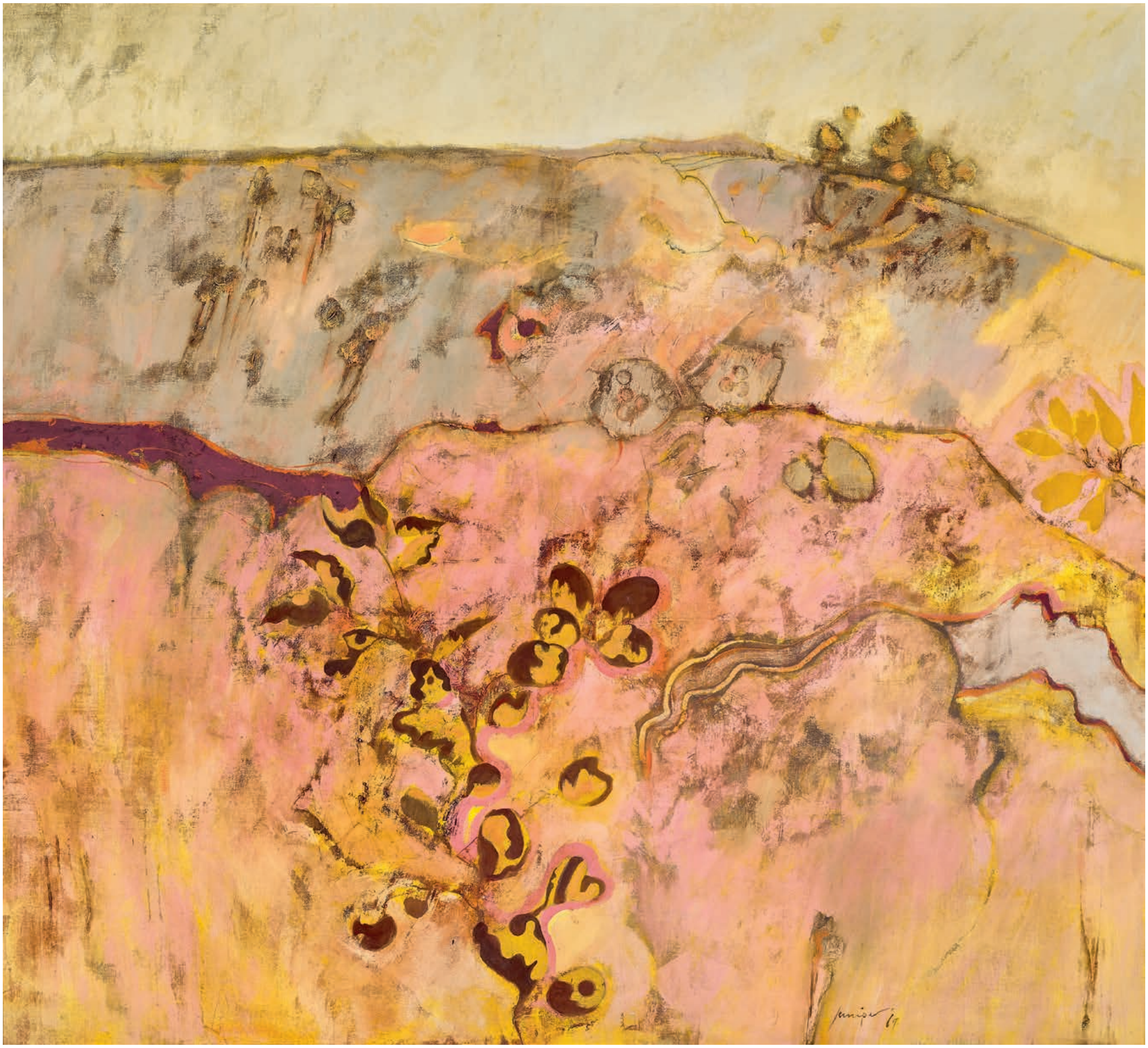
1. Mink, S., 'Of Robert Juniper', *Art and Australia*, vol. 16, no. 4, June 1979, p. 350. Juniper's father was an engineer on the pipeline designed by C. Y. O'Connor (father of the artist Kathleen O'Connor) which brought water to the Kalgoorlie-Coolgardie goldfields.
2. Juniper's working process is described in full in *Artist in focus 2: Robert Juniper*, exhibition flyer, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 1988, non-paginated.
3. Robert Juniper in conversation with John Scott, cited ibid.

ANDREW GAYNOR



DICK WATKINS

36

born 1937
ANTHROPOLOGY, 1973
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
122.0 x 165.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
ANTHROPOLOGY DICK WATKINS 1973

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Coventry Gallery, Sydney
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 28; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 95, p. 108 (illus.)

Dick Watkins is one of Australia finest formalist and painterly abstractionists of his generation. Critical and curatorial interest in his work has never hesitated in a career spanning more than five decades. He is an artist with the rare gift of taking his initial conception to realisation, and when the resolution of pictorial form is achieved, he can effortlessly change stylistic emphasis.

With an interest in European Modernism and North American abstraction, Watkins represents an autodidactic curiosity and understanding. Between 1959 – 1961 he travelled and saw the work of those who would shape his future. An unwavering interest in Picasso, Matisse and Jackson Pollock and other New School painters became the wellspring of his thinking about making paintings. This intellectual inquiry and working in the studio were always a source of influence, not appropriation. While the influences are often apparent, they are used as aesthetic and stylistic yardsticks and become unmistakably personal. Watkins' approach was explored in the exhibition *Dick Watkins in Context: An Exhibition from the Collection of the National Gallery of Australia.* In the company of greats from Picasso and Matisse to Robert Rauschenberg, de Kooning, Robert Motherwell and Jackson Pollock it was a gesture of astonishing respect for an Australian artist.[1]

Surface flatness, clarity of form and colour reached a distinctive culmination for Watkins when *The Mooche*, 1968 was exhibited and praised critically in *The Field* exhibition in 1968.[2] A distinct shift followed.

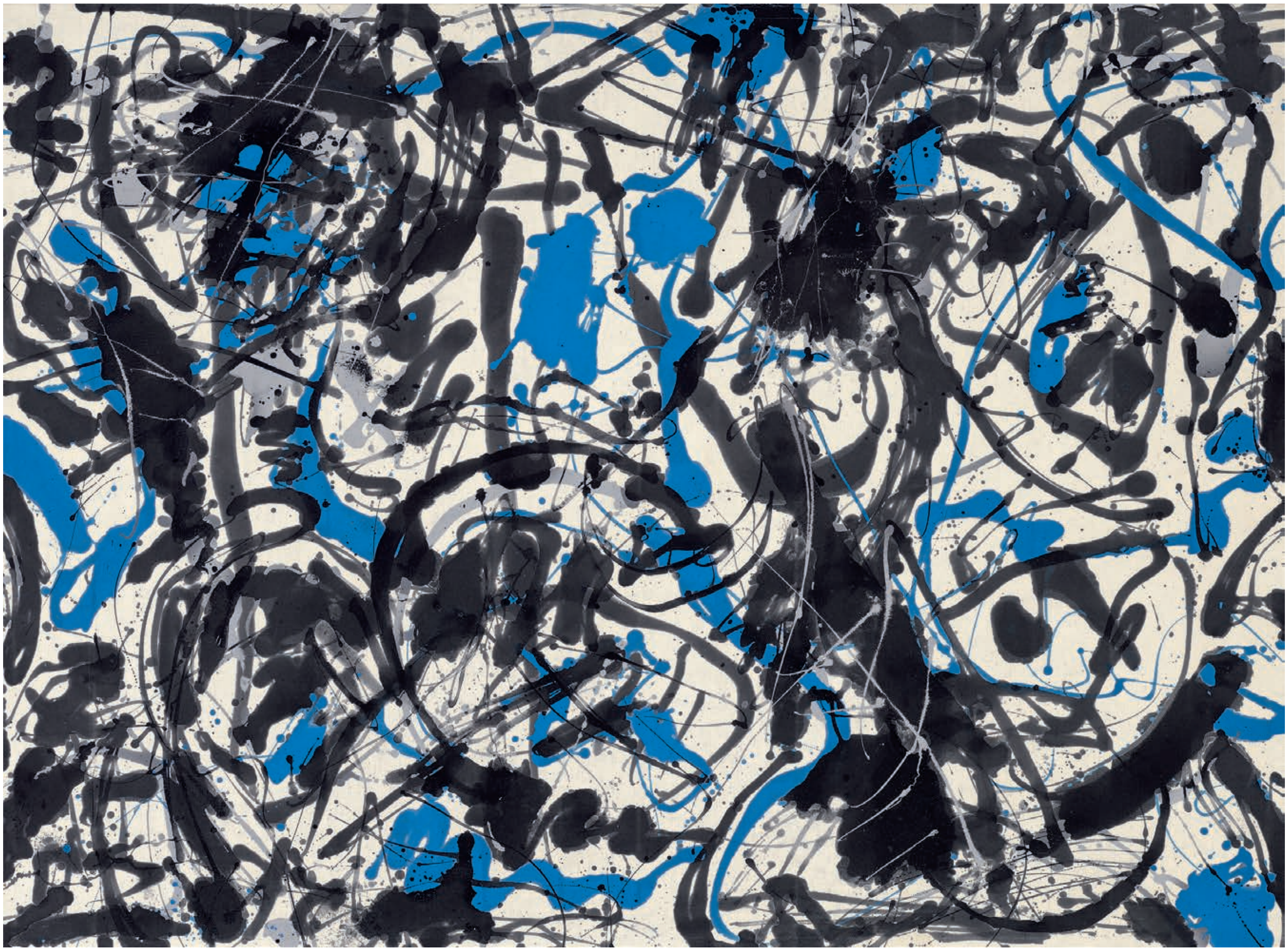
In the earlier, *Untitled,* 1970, deftly controlled drips and sweeps of black paint become a stained choreographed calligraphy. The execution is flowing and lyrical with each action held in check.[3] In *Anthropology*, painted three years later, a commanding robustness energises the surface. The looping and swirling lyricism in black, blue and silver-grey inflections is quite unlike Australian lyrical abstraction of the time – its unapologetic debt to Abstract Expressionism becomes a rethinking of a painterly genre which had held a lifelong preoccupation.

Watkins' colour is invariably muted, no glaring primaries, no shrillness. One aspect of his post-colourfield work is the use of colour as a flat plane which is activated with rapidly brushed black gestures. Another is where coloured sgraffito-like forms are further delineated with black.

Anthropology embraces a confidence and sheer exuberance where correction, erasure and overpainting is not possible. The ambition and clarity of Watkins' intention is unequivocal in its realisation.

1. *Dick Watkins in Context: An Exhibition from the Collection of the National Gallery of Australia*, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, 1993
2. *The Field*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1968 – a landmark exhibition of Colourfield abstraction to mark the opening of the NGV at its new StKilda Road premises. *The Mooche*, 1968, synthetic polymer paint and oil on canvas, collection of the Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
3. Dick Watkins, *Untitled*, 1970, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Gift of Penelope Seidler, 2001

DOUG HALL AM



SYDNEY BALL

37

(1933 – 2017)
MANASSAS BLUE, 1973
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
198.0 x 244.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
'MANASSAS BLUE' / SYDNEY BALL 1973

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

PROVENANCE

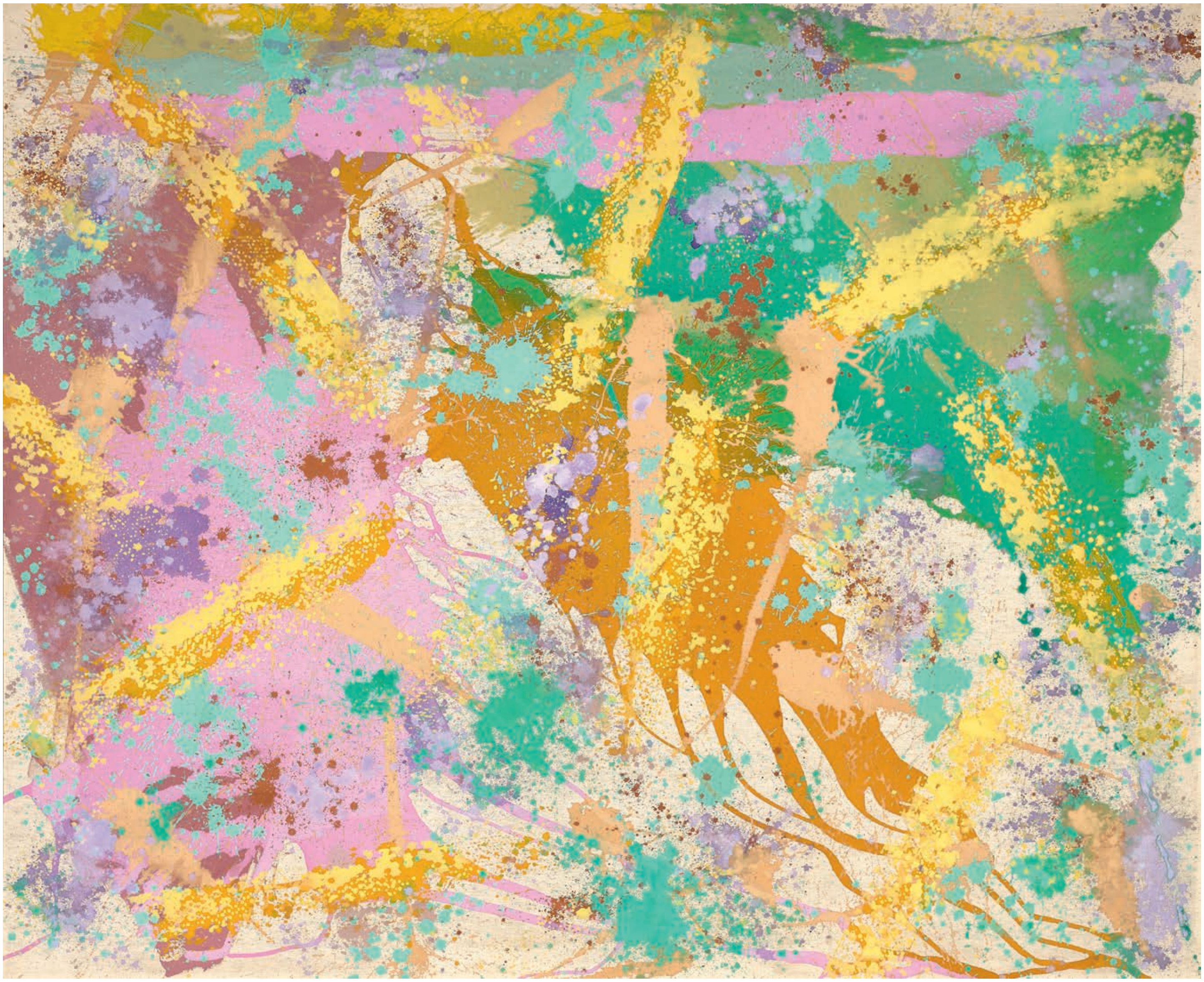
Bonython Gallery, Sydney
National Australia Bank Collection, acquired in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Paintings by Sydney Ball, Bonython Gallery, Sydney, 17 March – 3 April 1973
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988

LITERATURE

Thomas, D., 'Sydney Ball Joins Revival', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 22 March 1973, p. 31
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 4, p. 17 (illus., as 'Manassis Blue')
Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980*, Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 43 (illus., as 'Marnassis Blue')



Pioneering abstract painter Sydney Ball wrote of the expansive and sensuous *Manassas Blue*, one of his first 'Stain Paintings' which featured in a sell-out exhibition in Bonython Galleries in March 1973: '*Manassis* [sic.] *Blue* was one of a group of paintings completed in 1972 on my return from New York where I lived from 1969 – 1971. The format of the work was influenced by my years in New York and the need to re-evaluate the role of colour in my paintings… the loosening up of the surface and a new way for colour to organise the structure of the picture. […] in *Manassas Blue* the way in which the paint is absorbed into the fibre of the [cotton] duck by pouring, rolling and brushing, emphasises both the two-dimensional surface and the richness of the colour'.[1]

Although Sydney Ball had remarkable success of with his early, New York influenced Hard Edge abstract paintings, which pioneered colour field practice in Australia in the mid-1960s (in particular his circular *Canto* series and semi-sculptural *Modular* painted constructions) the artist found himself in 1971 taking a sharp turn into full-blown gestural abandonment. Joyous and vibrant, the explosive nature of these large canvases demonstrated Ball's astounding agility and inventiveness, unselfconsciously embracing what Daniel Thomas qualified at the time, in March 1973, as an 'abstract expressionist revival'[2], one which Ball, as a mature geometric abstractionist had surprisingly joined. However, this was not so drastic a change as it would seem. It can be read as a logical continuation of Ball's chief concern with a painting's planar surface and the explorations of colour and the effects of particular spatial orchestrations on the canvas.

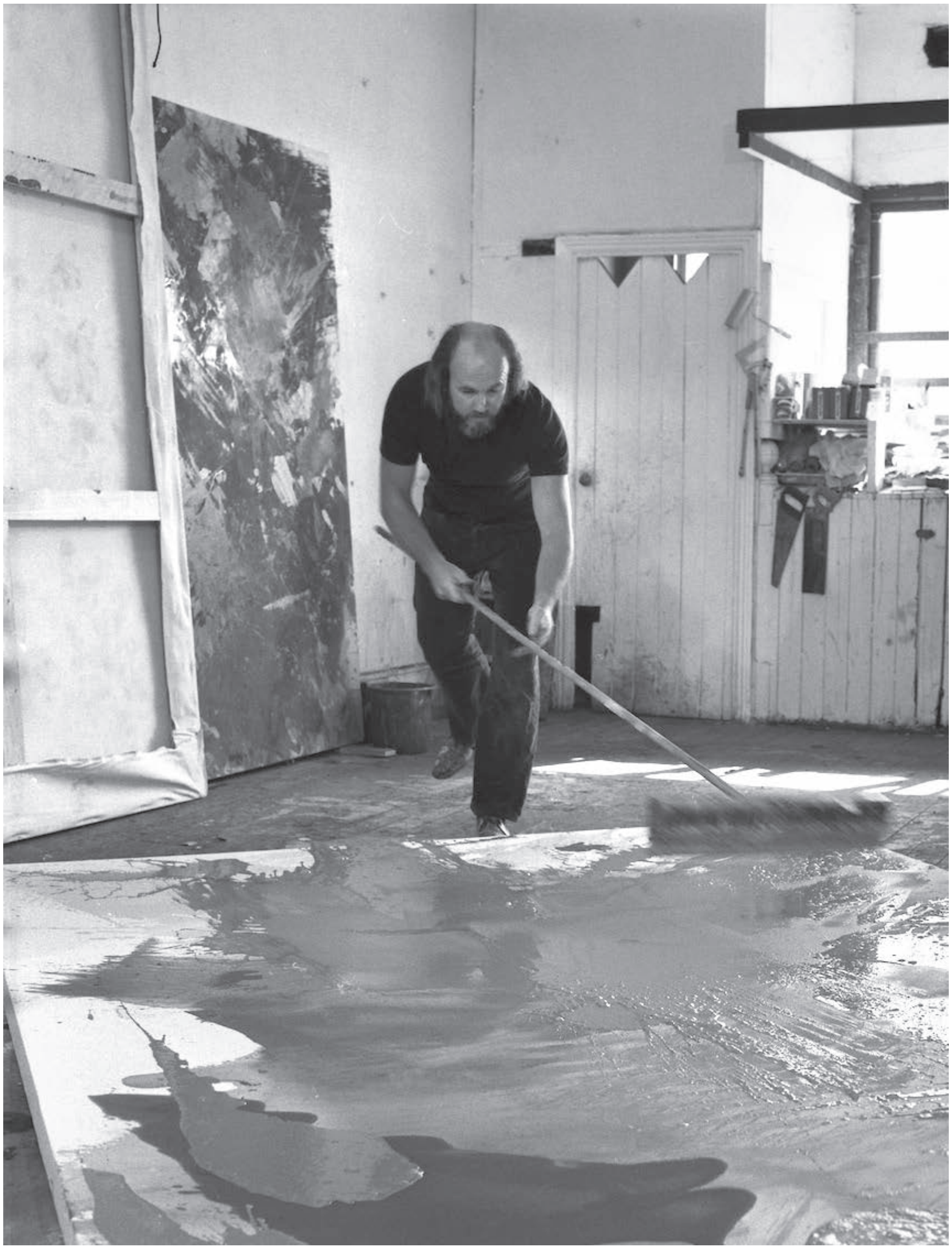
The people and concepts that Sydney Ball had encountered during his second sojourn in New York had a profound effect on the 'Stain Paintings' that he produced in 1972, 'eventually brought forward these present paintings of high calibre'.[3] The sense of urgency and immediacy of visual effect that was hitherto found in Ball's severe surfaces, was now translated into mottled action paintings, informal and ethereal. *Manassas Blue* displays all of the attributes of American critic Clement Greenberg's *Post-painterly abstraction*: a thinned acrylic paint (borrowed from Mark Rothko and Helen Frankenthaler's stained oil washes in New York, whom Ball had worked alongside), a raw and unprimed canvas left bare in places and non-uniform *poured* areas of pure rich colour (the optical effects of which Ball had appreciated in the works of Kenneth Noland).[4]

While some of Ball's early Stain paintings, bore the bar-shaped forms of past works, those painted in Sydney were not only brighter in their hue, but contained no straight edges at all. *Manassas Blue* has a series of superimposed splashes of paint, with the illusion of transparency creating a complex ordering. These layers are crowned by uneven diagonal bands of rolled pale yellow strips which now replaced Ball's stencilled bars. Although this work, like the others in the first stain series, was produced lying the canvas flat on the floor of the studio, painted by pouring buckets of pure colour on to its surface, the artist did specify with hand drawn arrows verso, which way the painting was to be orientated once completed.

Manassas Blue was exhibited in early 1973 in Ball's first exhibition at Bonython Galleries in Sydney after his return to Australia. The technical bravura of these paintings was reinforced in their bold presentation in this gallery, with Ball covering its walls with extraordinarily large canvases. The show was described as 'glamorous and exuberant' in the press,[5] and three paintings were directly acquired for state collections. The title *Manassas Blue* possibly refers to Manassas, a town in Northern Virginia, USA visited by the artist during a road trip down the east coast of the US with Elwyn Lynn and Patrick McCaughey. Manassas was the site of two major battles during the American Civil War and sits across a pass in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the name of the town meaning 'basket shaped' in the local native American language. As his friend McCaughey recently noted, these stain paintings are the most personal that Ball allowed himself to paint, entirely dictated by feeling and surprise revelations.[6]

1. The artist, 1981, cited in Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980*, Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 43
2. Thomas, D., 'Sydney Ball Joins Revival', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 22 March 1973, p.31
3. McCaughey, P., *Art International*, 20 October 1974
4. The artist, 2008, cited in Loxley, A., *Sydney Ball: The colour paintings 1963 – 2007*, Penrith Regional Gallery, Sydney, 2008, p. 14
5. Thomas, ibid.
6. McCaughey, P., *Strange Country, Why Australian Painting Matters*, The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 2014, p. 310

LUCIE REEVES-SMITH



Sydney Ball, in his studio with his Stain painting, Oxford Street, Sydney, 1975
photographer unknown
Courtesy of the Sydney Ball Estate and Sullivan+Strumpf, Sydney

PETER BOOTH

38

born 1940
PAINTING, 1975
oil on linen
76.0 x 61.0 cm
signed verso: PETER BOOTH

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Pinacotheca, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1976 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 12, p. 25 (illus.)
Hart, D., *William Delafield Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 119

Untitled, 1975 is perhaps less familiar in character than Booth's formative abstract paintings and his spectral figuration that began in the late seventies. But there is one element which connects every phase – it is always the expressive and psychological possibilities through the act of painting.

Booth's late sixties Colourfield paintings are invariably large and usually represented with two or three juxtaposed blocks of colour within a larger expansive colour. Unlike many of his co-exhibitors in *The Field* exhibition, Booth's forms are never immaculately edged, and he avoided the flat formality of hard-edge painting as we know it.[1] Amongst the *Field* a stained effect was common – one which avoided mannered surfaces, let alone painterly verve. Booth was never willing to withhold the emotional potential of painting. His vast surfaces were not coolly flat but acknowledge the hand of the artist – each 'blocks' edge deliberately avoid any suggestion of taped masking helping to delineate edges and define forms.

This approach reached its sublime eloquence in the so-called 'doorway' paintings: vertical rectangular-shaped black canvases and narrowly bordered on three edges with a contrasting colour where black drips and inflections spill onto it. The viscous glossy surfaces with their swathes of controlled painterly grandeur are superb examples of a quiet, inscrutable presence in new abstraction in Australia.[2] These are contemplative and meditative works for unhurried viewing.

Untitled, 1975 was made in the wake of the doorway paintings. An unrestrained exuberance of gestural energy has abandoned former subtleties. There can be no ambiguity – these are impassioned paintings rich with impasto, a palette knife forging an overall anxious effect of colour and darkness. Booth is seldom one to talk about personal circumstances or states of mind as catalysts for approaches to making a particular work. Nonetheless in the few paintings of this kind, many include mirror fragments imbedded in the paint itself.[3] In 1975, in a mistaken home invasion he was attacked and pushed into a mirror which smashed and he thus incorporated in these works.

Booth enjoys equal respect as an abstractionist and figurative painter. His surreal and apocalyptic images eschew literalism and emerge from the artist's subconscious. Black has always remained an essential part of his expression which includes, of course, a magnificent body of drawings. While resolved and complete within itself, we can also easily imagine *Untitled* as a clipped vignette, a detail anticipating something fuller in a nightmare of abstracted forms and people in the paintings which followed.

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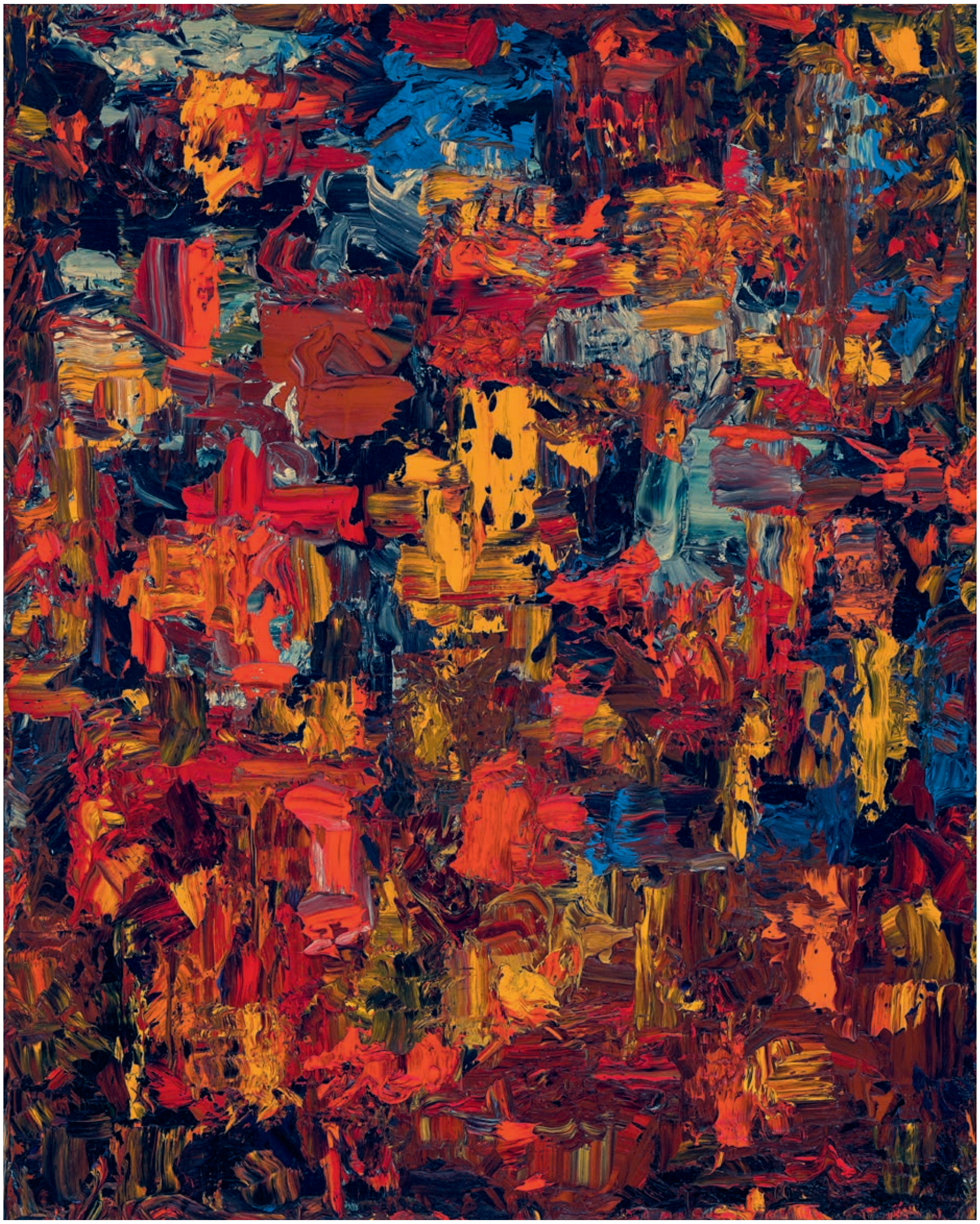
1. Many artists in *The Field* exhibition showed a strong predilection for what Clement Greenberg (1909 – 1994) coined *Post Painterly Abstraction*; a term used as a counterpoint to Abstract Expressionism and its brushed mannerisms and occasional claims to mysticism.
2. One of the finest examples of these is *Untitled*, 1971, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
3. A complementary work is *Painting*, 1976, synthetic polymer and metallic paint on mirror and stones on canvas, collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. It is included in Gellatly, K.(ed.), *101 Contemporary Australian Artists*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2012, p. 35 (illus.)

DOUG HALL AM



PAUL PARTOS

39

(1943 – 2002)
PAINTING, 1978
oil, string and pins on canvas
137.0 x 111.5 cm
signed and dated verso: P Partos 78

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Pinacotheca, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in August 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Eureka! : artists from Australia, Serpentine Gallery, London, 13 March – 25 April 1982, Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, 24 March – 25 April 1982 (label attached verso, illus. in exhibition catalogue, p. 31)
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Collection of Modern Art in the Seventies, Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Victoria, 9 May – 2 June 1985
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
'The Seventies' Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection 'Modern Art of the Seventies', Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 17

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 70, p. 83 (illus.)
'Insight into Recent Art', *The Express*, Victoria, 2 May 1985, p. 12

There have been many times over almost 200 years when the death or end of painting has been declared. Paul Delaroche claimed 'From today, painting is dead' when he saw the first daguerreotype around 1840.[1] Marcel Duchamp rejected painting and in 1917, his porcelain readymade, a urinal titled *Fountain* and signed *R. Mutt*, defined his future. The great American Minimalist, Donald Judd, thought painting was finished, something he and the proponents of Conceptualism had in common. None of this was lost on Paul Partos. *Painting,* 1978 is from a crucial time for the artist – his interest in Conceptualism and new international currents had been experienced firsthand from the mid-sixties.[2] It wasn't an impulse reaction in the wake of the much-vaunted international exhibitions travelling to Australia.[3]

Partos arrived in Australia from Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, as a six-year-old. In 1959 he enrolled at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology – other students included Lesley Dumbrell, Gareth Sansom, Robert Jacks and George Baldessin. His expressive figuration revealed an emerging painter of prodigious talent. Melbourne's Gallery A held a sell-out exhibition in 1965 and Gallery A in Sydney held a solo exhibition later in the year. His expressionist inclinations soon cooled and in 1968 he made *Vesta II* which was included in *The Field* exhibition.[4] It is a rectangular sprayed painting and within it is a smaller empty rectangle where the wall on which it hangs is visible. The idea of the work framing itself was already in play. *Black Screen*, 1968 – 69 is a vertical rectangular sculpture where nylon mesh is stretched over a wooden frame which literally frames a delicately poised translucent folded form.[5]

In *Painting,* 1978, painting becomes a visualised process and system – one able to inquire into and be about itself. It is a timely inquiry about the nature and physical presence of painting at a time of considerable theoretical posturing about art and its future, both in Australia and abroad. Partos was a gifted painter and he never dismissed painting's sensory and emotional potential – we are certain of this from his formative figurative work and what followed *Painting*.

But here Partos develops a visual and conceptual proposition which is delineated and ordered – where the act of looking and thinking is never superseded by the expressive capacity of paint itself and any subject it might depict. Nothing exists beyond the painting itself. It becomes a masterly combination of the artist's natural painterly impulses and his strong intellectual inquisitiveness.

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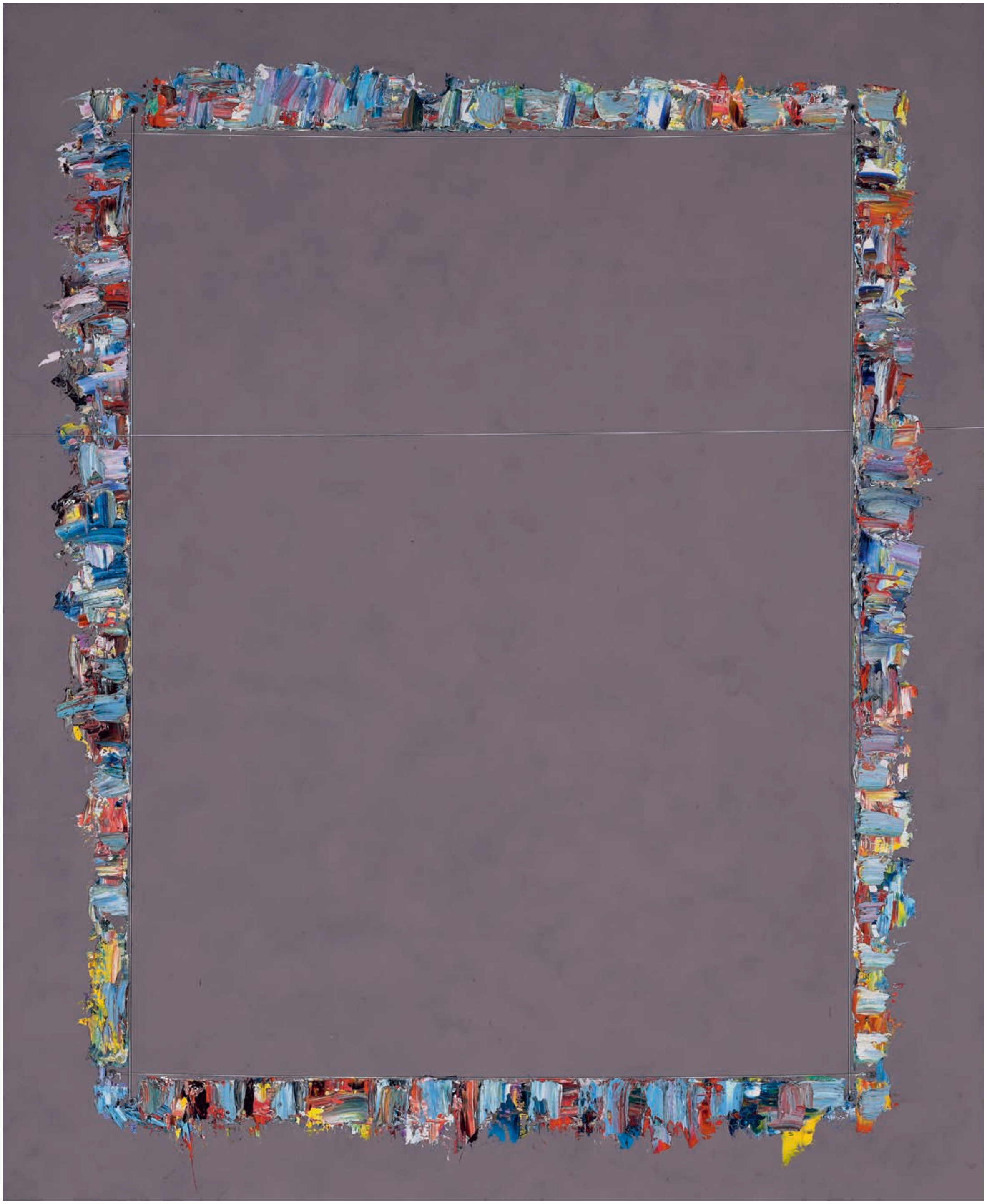
1. Paul Delaroche (1797 – 1856), celebrated French painter of historical subjects.
2. Between 1965 – 66 Partos was in Europe and London. He was living in New York City in 1970 – 72.
3. Charles Green, 'Notes on the Centre: Two Decades of American Painting in Australia, 1967',*Tate Papers*, no. 32, Autumn 2019.
4. *The Field*, National Gallery of Victoria, 1968, a landmark exhibition of Colourfield abstraction to mark the opening of the NGV at its new St Kilda Road premises. *Vesta II*, 1968, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, collection of the Art Gallery New South Wales
5. *Black Screen*, 1968 – 69, synthetic polymer paint on nylon mesh on wooden framework, collection of Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria Corio 5 Star Whiskey Prize, 1969

DOUG HALL AM



MICHAEL JOHNSON

40

born 1938
MADDER, 1979
from the TAYLOR SQUARE series
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
169.5 x 183.0 cm
signed and dated verso: Michael Johnson 1979

ESTIMATE: $25,000 – 35,000

PROVENANCE

Gallery A, Sydney (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

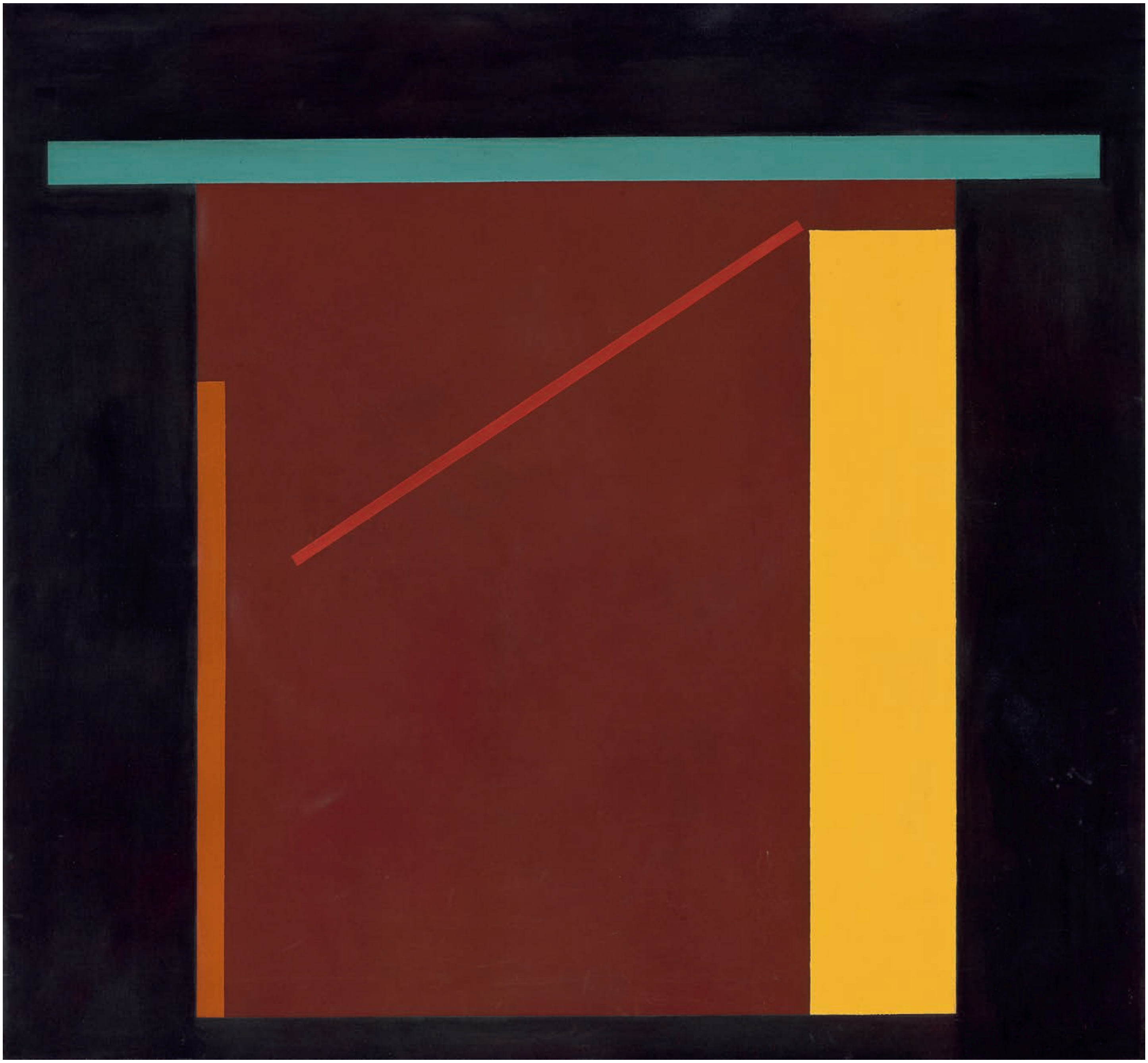
Michael Johnson, Taylor Square Series, Gallery A, Sydney, 14 July – 4 August 1979
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982

LITERATURE

Borlase, N., 'Terra Firma – Dreams of Flight', *Sydney Morning Herald*, Sydney, 21 July 1979, p. 16
Faerber, R., 'The Colour Speaks of Taylor Square', *The Australian Jewish Times*, Sydney, 2 August 1979
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 49, p. 62 (illus.)
Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980*, Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 152 (illus.)

The style of Hard-Edge formalism, cleanly delineated colour-based abstraction, was so pervasive and popular when *The Field* exhibition was shown at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1968 that no one could have predicted that in just a few years it would have all but vanished as a coherent movement amongst young painters. By the late 1970s, Michael Johnson was almost the only Australian painter still left working within its brittle and rigorous precepts. The small group of painters who had been shaped abroad in the 1960s and spearheaded a right to paint in a geometric 'international mode' made works which now suffered the appearance of clinical impersonality.[1] While most of Johnson's internationally-minded peers decamped into amorphous painterliness, Johnson clung doggedly to minimal geometric abstraction.

After spending six years living in New York city, Johnson returned to Sydney in 1976, finding a home in Cammeray and a studio in Darlinghurst's Taylor Square (where he would remain until 1984). Here, Johnson finally had access to a large enough working space to accommodate very large single piece works. These paintings and drawings continued to respond to his immediate surroundings, in the same way that his New York works had been mainly vertical. They were based on the urban grid, rectangular and horizontally expansive, only curtailed in size by the physical limits of the artist's own body as he set out the arrangement of the picture. Having substituted the spray gun of



a brief flirtation with lyrical abstraction with graph paper, the last years of the 1970s were to become the most rigorously geometric period in Michael Johnson's long career. The first instances of strong diagonal lines began to appear in New York and crystallised in paintings executed upon his return to Australia, as is seen the AGNSW's *Matthew's Cavern*, 1974 and QAGOMA's *Painting No. 3*, c.1976.

With what Patrick McCaughey described as 'the sense and courage to go back to what he does best'[2], returning to his 'terra firma of New York abstraction'[3], Johnson's 'Taylor Square' paintings are late examples of high, Greenbergian formalism. They revel in the flat, inert materiality of synthetic polymer paint – bearing the initial appearance of emotional neutrality through rectilinear shapes and bold unwavering lines. While these shapes within *Madder*, 1979, and other Taylor Square paintings echo the busy four-way intersection in the inner-city suburb of Darlinghurst, there is more to these paintings than a simple aerial diagram. Johnson's aim was instead founded in the perceptual effects and tensions that can be created using the most basic of forms and colours, raw units of energy. Johnson's linear and colour combinations cause effects of movement – superposition or receding depth. Fundamentally a colour-field painter, Johnson regarded these shapes as mere receptacles for delicately modulated colours, carefully and unevenly stained on unprimed canvas with borders not quite straight.

The first examples of Johnson's Taylor Square series in 1976 were variations on a strict geometric theme: the dynamic interplay of a square, rectangle and intersecting diagonal beams of varying lengths and sizes. These were made with pastel on paper, many of which were quickly exhibited in June of the following year at Gallery A. These large drawings relate to the Taylor Square paintings like two sides of a coin, amplifying the seriousness and breadth of one another.[4] The curious effects of colour density and geometric relationships between planes became apparent to the artist in the pastel works and were only fully explored in grand scale in paintings in 1979. While Michael Johnson had already exhibited with both Gallery A in Melbourne and Max Hutchinson in New York, it was at the new Sydney premises of Gallery A that he could immerse himself in cutting edge abstraction, including very early examples by Ralph Balson, and other imaginative iterations of radical Australian art consistent with the gallery's original interest in the Bauhaus.[5]

The Taylor Square paintings were exhibited together, as a series, in July 1979 at Gallery A, almost two years after his exhibition of the related works on paper. The works balanced structural severity with rich colour saturation and delicate transitions of hue within each shape. The central square of *Madder* is painted in a thin and modulated eponymous red, the flat frontality of which dissuades the instinct to interpret the square as an open frame through which to look. There is instead a strong architectonic quality, with smaller shapes of opaque colour placed on top of the main square figure. *Sydney Morning Herald* critic, Nancy Borlase, aptly noticed the double meaning of the title of these paintings, referring both to a specific geographical location of the artist's studio, and the formal structure of these paintings, all variations on the theme of a centrally placed square in a rectangular field. She then went on to appreciate Johnson's 'imposed disciplines, which far from limiting his art, enrich it… the contrasting and beautifully balanced paintings are controlled by an intuitively 'felt' sensibility. They are conspicuously handsome paintings'.[6]

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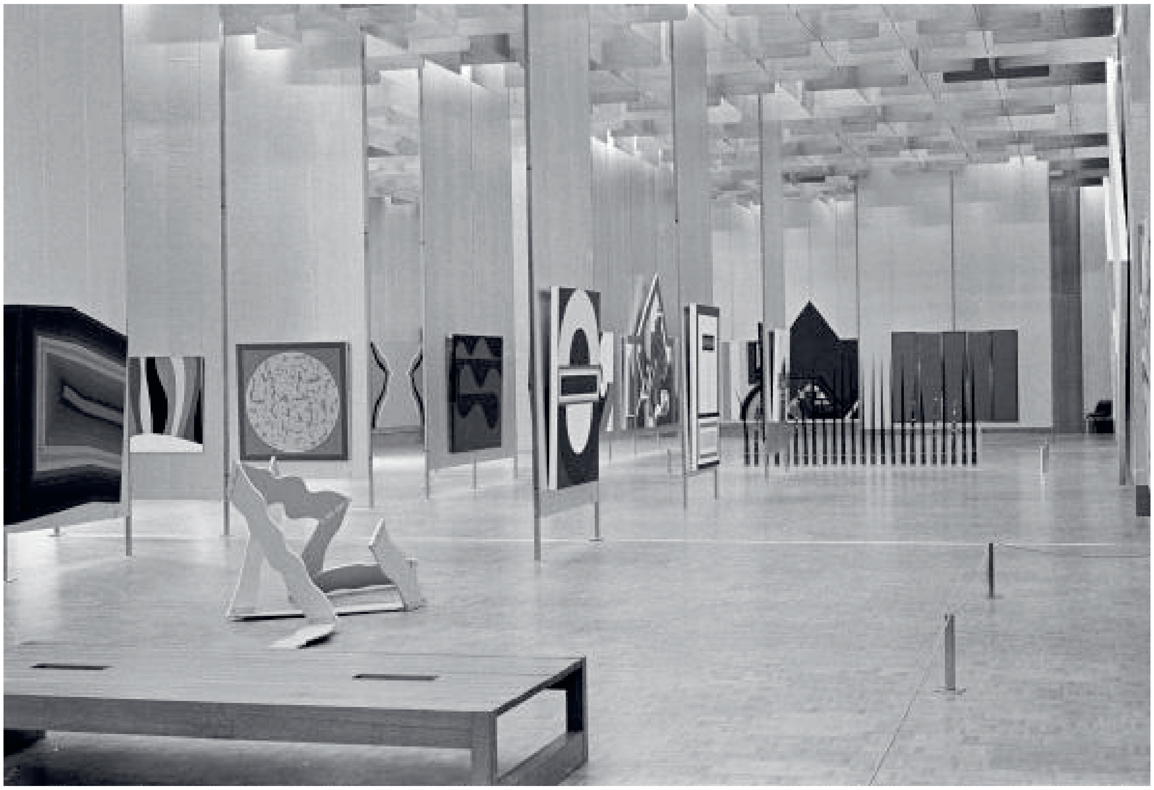
1. McCaughey, P., 'Surviving the 'Seventies in Australia', in Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980,* Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 148
2. McCaughey, ibid., p. 157
3. Borlase, N., 'Terra Firma – Dreams of Flight', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 21 July 1979, p. 16
4. McGillick, P., *Michael Johnson's 'Taylor Square Series',* Institute of Contemporary Art, Sydney, October 1979, p. 1
5. France, C., 'The Galleries of Max Hutchinson' in *Gallery A Sydney 1964 – 1983*, Campbelltown Arts Centre, New South Wales, 2009, p. 43
6. Borlase, ibid.

LUCIE REEVES-SMITH



Installation view of *‘The Field’*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1968
photographer: George Mehes
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

JOHN COBURN

41

(1925 – 2006)
FRUITS OF SUMMER, 1973
synthetic polymer paint on linen
130.0 x 195.0 cm
signed lower right: Coburn
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
FRUITS OF SUMMER / JOHN COBURN / SYDNEY 1973

ESTIMATE: $60,000 – 80,000

PROVENANCE

Bonython Art Gallery, Sydney
The National Australia Bank Art Collection,
acquired in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

John Coburn, Bonython Art Gallery, Sydney,
25 October – 10 November 1973, cat. 17
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Australian Pavilion at the World Expo '88, Australian Pavilion, Brisbane, 7 April – 4 November 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 7
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 7; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 24, p. 37 (illus.)
Amadio, N., *John Coburn Paintings*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1988, p. 199
'First Public Display in Sydney of National's Paintings', *The University of Sydney News*, Sydney, vol. 21, no. 20, 1 August 1989, p. 170

'John Coburn's style is unique in Australian art and his contribution is one of inestimable worth. How does one value or rate in terms of dollars the art of a man whose vision elevates us to spiritual consciousness?'[1]

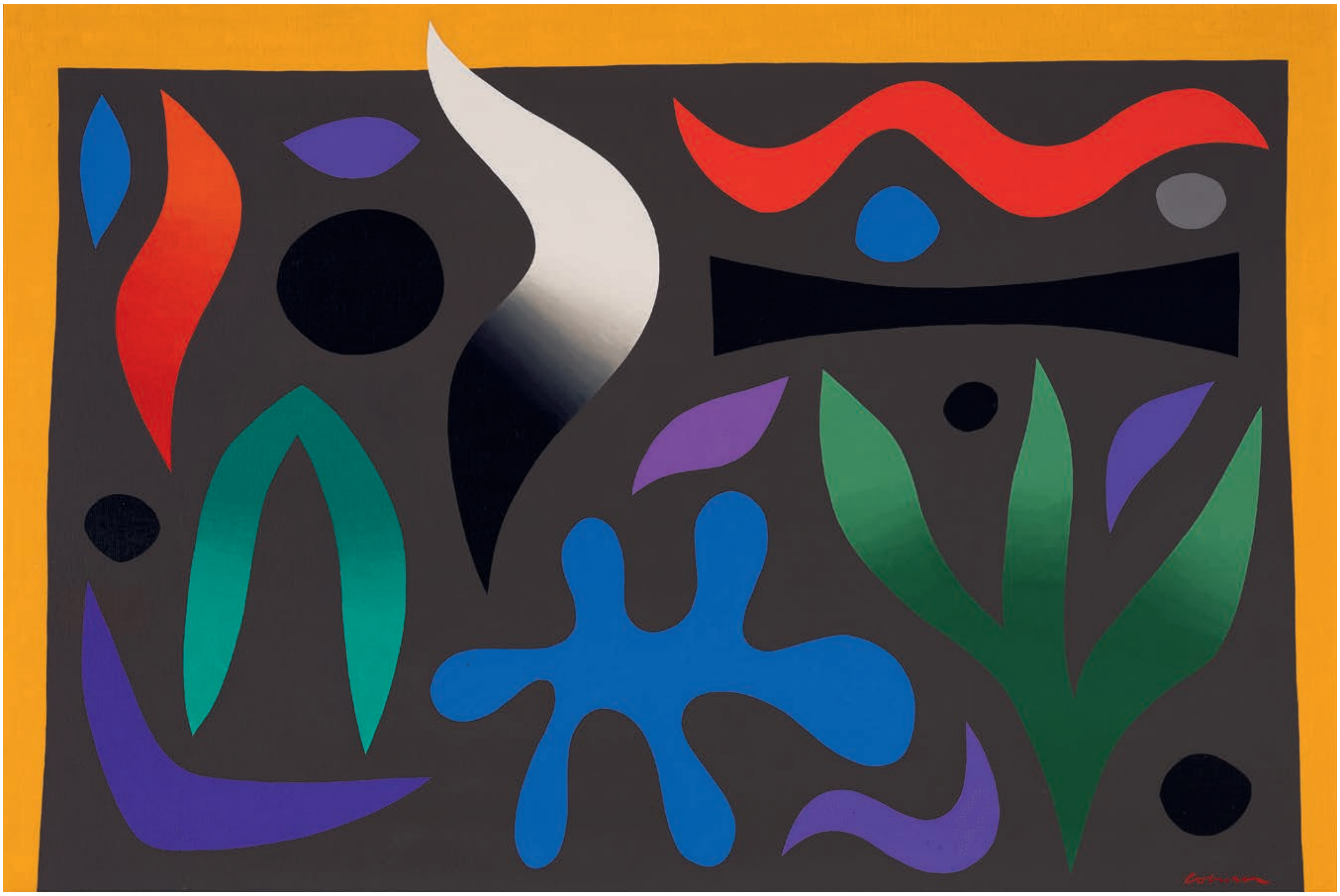
Unlike his contemporaries for whom abstraction represented the glorification of geometry and colour, John Coburn's works are seldom purely cerebral or devoid of emotion. To the contrary, suffused with an overwhelming sense of celebration and allegory, his deeply personal iconography is predicated upon the promise of renewal – whether it be the regeneration of nature or the resurrection of the human spirit. Betraying strong affinities with the work of Matisse, Rothko, Picasso and Miró, his remarkable oeuvre encompassing paintings, prints and tapestries is thus which he reveals and exalts through the most direct of images. Indeed, highlighting the profound spiritual significance of his art, Nadine Amadio suggests Coburn as a pilgrim, '…his signs and symbols speak[ing] eloquently of a man who has been prepared to make a journey and return with the gifts of his insight.'[2]

When Coburn embarked upon the exquisite *Fruits of Summer*, 1973 offered here, he was universally regarded by public and private collectors alike as being at his creative height. The previous year, he had been appointed Head of Sydney's National Art School; his curtains of the 'Moon and Sun' had just endowed with added splendour the interiors of the Sydney Opera House; and the Australian Government had presented his 'Creation Series' of tapestries to the John F. Kennedy Centre for the Performing Arts, Washington. In 1973, his considerable international standing as a religious artist was augmented by the commissioning of the painting *Tree of Life III*, 1973, by the Vatican Museum's Gallery of Contemporary Religious Art, while closer to home, other works from this richly fertile year found their way into major state and corporate art collections, including *Valencia*, 1973 (Queensland Art Gallery / Museum of Modern Art, Brisbane); *Aubusson Green*, 1973 (National Gallery of Australia, Canberra) and *Garden in Vevey*, 1973 which was acquired by the BHP Collection.

Saturated with emotion and the promise of prosperity offered by the hottest of the four seasons, thus *Fruits of Summer* fuses balance and asymmetry to create a dynamic, harmonious composition in which the artist's signature biomorphic forms float and colours pulsate with a vitalistic energy against the darker, sun-parched ground. Radiating passion and joy – whether through the hot hues of celebration and the earth, or the fecundity of lively greens, and resonant blues and purples – the work embodies Coburn at his finest, arresting in its simplicity and compelling in its ability to explore the profound and intuitive. As Coburn observed of his commitment to the allegorical and sensory potential of his art, 'Appearances are distracting. What you feel about a thing is important, not what it looks like. I don't want to teach people to see. I want to get them to feel'.[3]

1. Strzynecki, P., 'Beyond Psalm 46' in *John Coburn*, Australian Galleries, Melbourne, 2000, p.8
2. Amadio, N., *John Coburn: The Paintings*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1988, p. 10
3. The artist, cited in Klepac, L., *John Coburn: The Spirit of Colour*, The Beagle Press, Sydney, 2003, p. 33

VERONICA ANGELATOS



LESLEY DUMBRELL

42

born 1941
CHINOOK, 1975
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
175.0 x 260.0 cm
signed and dated verso: L. Dumbrell 75.
bears inscription on stretcher bar verso: CHINOOK

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

PROVENANCE

Abraxas Gallery, Canberra
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1977 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Lesley Dumbrell: Paintings and Studies, Abraxas Gallery, Canberra, 16 March – 4 April 1976, cat. 4
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Good vibrations: the legacy of Op Art in Australia, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 7 October – 24 November 2002

LITERATURE

de Groen, G., 'Real Sensitivity Shown', *The Canberra Times*, Canberra, 23 March 1976, p. 11
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 33, p. 46 (illus.), front cover (illus.)
Hart, D., *William Delafield Cook*, Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 119
Stanhope, Z., *Good vibrations: the legacy of Op Art in Australia*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 2002, p. 26 (illus.)
'Good vibrations to test the retina', *The Age*, Melbourne, 16 November 2002

RELATED WORK

Zephyr, 1975, acrylic on linen, dimensions and location unknown (illus. in *Leslie Dumbrell Portfolio. Optical Paintings*, https://www.lesleydumbrell.com/portfolio/optical-paintings-1970s)
Foehn, 1975, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 247.3 x 199.8 cm, in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Chinook, 1975 is from a time when many Australian artists were flitting between styles with some settling to produce paintings quite unlike earlier but, nevertheless, recent work. During the next decade there was considerable institutional reflection and speculation about the various appearances of abstraction and figuration. These took the form of exhibitions and critical writing: none included Australianness or a vernacular slant to give local meaning to art which was international in character.[1] In Lesley Dumbrell's home city, Melbourne, aspects of the much-vaunted *The Field* exhibition continued to echo while a variety of other responses were open to new and recent trends. With the rise of Postmodernist theory, we were numbed by its claims of the end of Modernism.

Dumbrell was untroubled by any need to accommodate or respond to such fractious debates. Her path was set early. Colourfield formalism and lyrical abstraction painting had been overwhelmingly the dominion of men. Abundant with possibilities, her subtly evolving abstraction would distinguish her career. An early interest in Mondrian and Malevich emphasised the resoluteness of abstraction, while Kandinsky's colour theories of 'inner resonance' and a colour's need to evoke feeling, were clearly complementary to Dumbrell's own instincts. Modernism was her wellspring and her encounter with the work of Bridget Riley and Jesús Rafael Soto was telling.[2]

Feminist activism was flourishing in Melbourne and Dumbrell was involved in various projects and surrounded by like-minded women. This found expression in a variety of ways including the exhibition, *A Room of One's Own* in 1975. During the that year, she also became a founding member of the Women's Art Register.[3]

'The reconciliation of feminism and the new abstract art… was for Dumbrell a vexed issue. Patterning and decoration, which were traditionally associated with women's art forms, nonetheless found a voice in abstraction.'[4] Her work is obviously disconnected from doctrinaire abstract formalists whose pursuit of Greenberg-espoused 'purity' rejected externally observed or felt influences intruding into the idea of a standalone and independent painting being self-referential and about itself, nothing else.

Chinook shimmers with light and the shapes oscillate with a gently orchestrated palette. It is underpinned by a discreet system and patterned logic, and while its debt to Op art is self-evident, here she reaches a complete resolution of a distinctly personal pictorial vocabulary. It is an intensely visual and sensory painting whose title reminds us of the reach of her inspiration; 'Chinook' is a warm prevailing wind in western North America.

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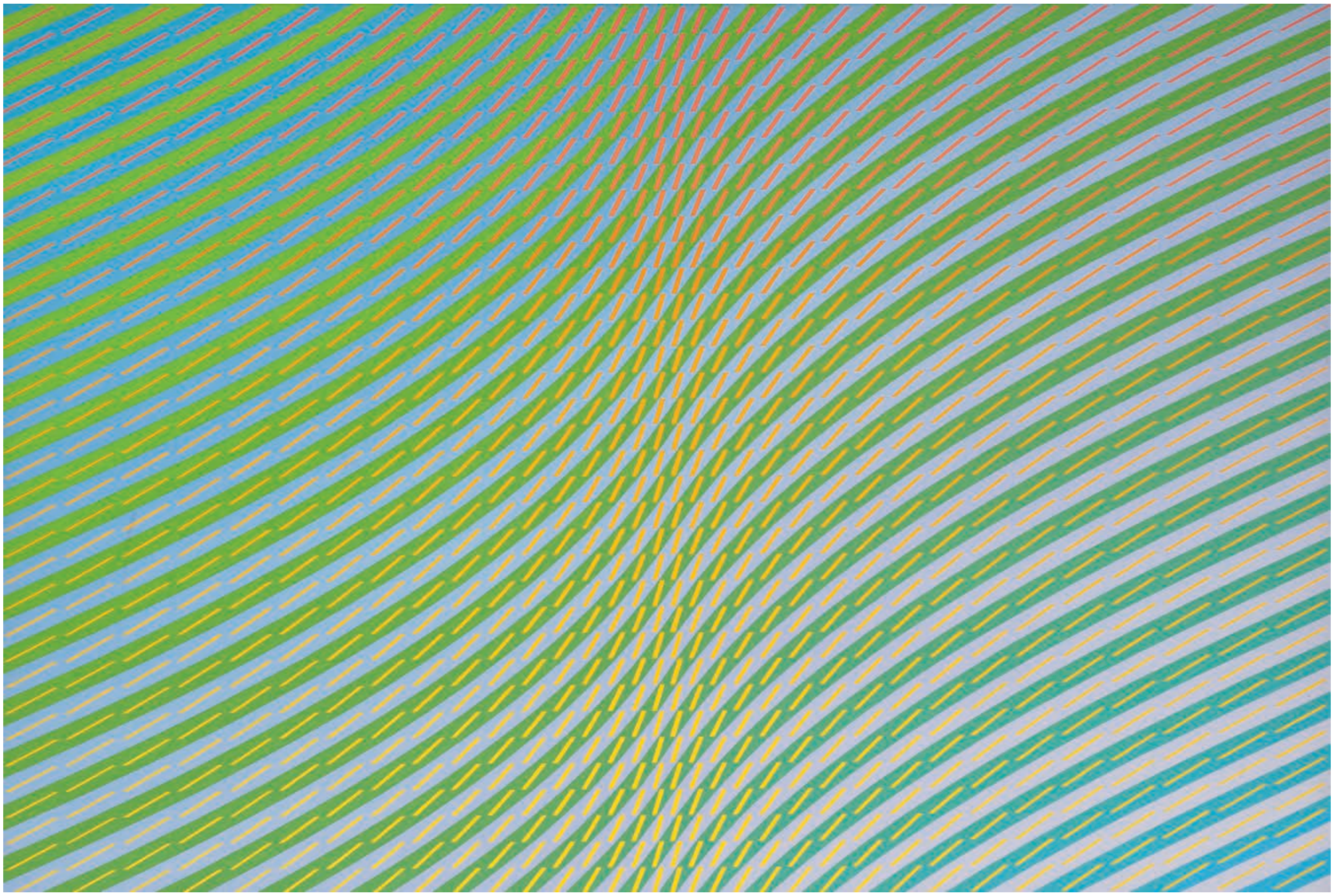
1. *Australian art 1960 – 1986, Field to Figuration, Works from the National Gallery of Victoria*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1986; *Vox Pop, Into the Eighties*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1983; *POPISM*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1982; *Geometric Abstraction*, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne, 1986.
2. Bridget Riley (born 1931) and Victor Vasarely (1908 – 1997) were British exponents of Op art, while Jesús Rafael Soto (1923 – 2005) Venezuelan op and kinetic artist.
3. *A Room of One's Own*, Ewing & George Paton Galleries, The University of Melbourne, Melbourne, 1975
4. Kent, R., Sh*ades of Light: Lesley Dumbrell 1971 – 1999,* Ian Potter Museum of Art, the University of Melbourne, 1999

DOUG HALL AM



MIRIAM STANNAGE

43

(1939 – 2016)
NEWS FROM DUBLIN, 1974
(also known as ‘IRISH SONG’)
felt-tipped pen and lead pencil on synthetic polymer on canvas
148.0 x 229.0 cm
signed and dated verso: STANNAGE 74
inscribed with title verso: “NEWS FROM DUBLIN”

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

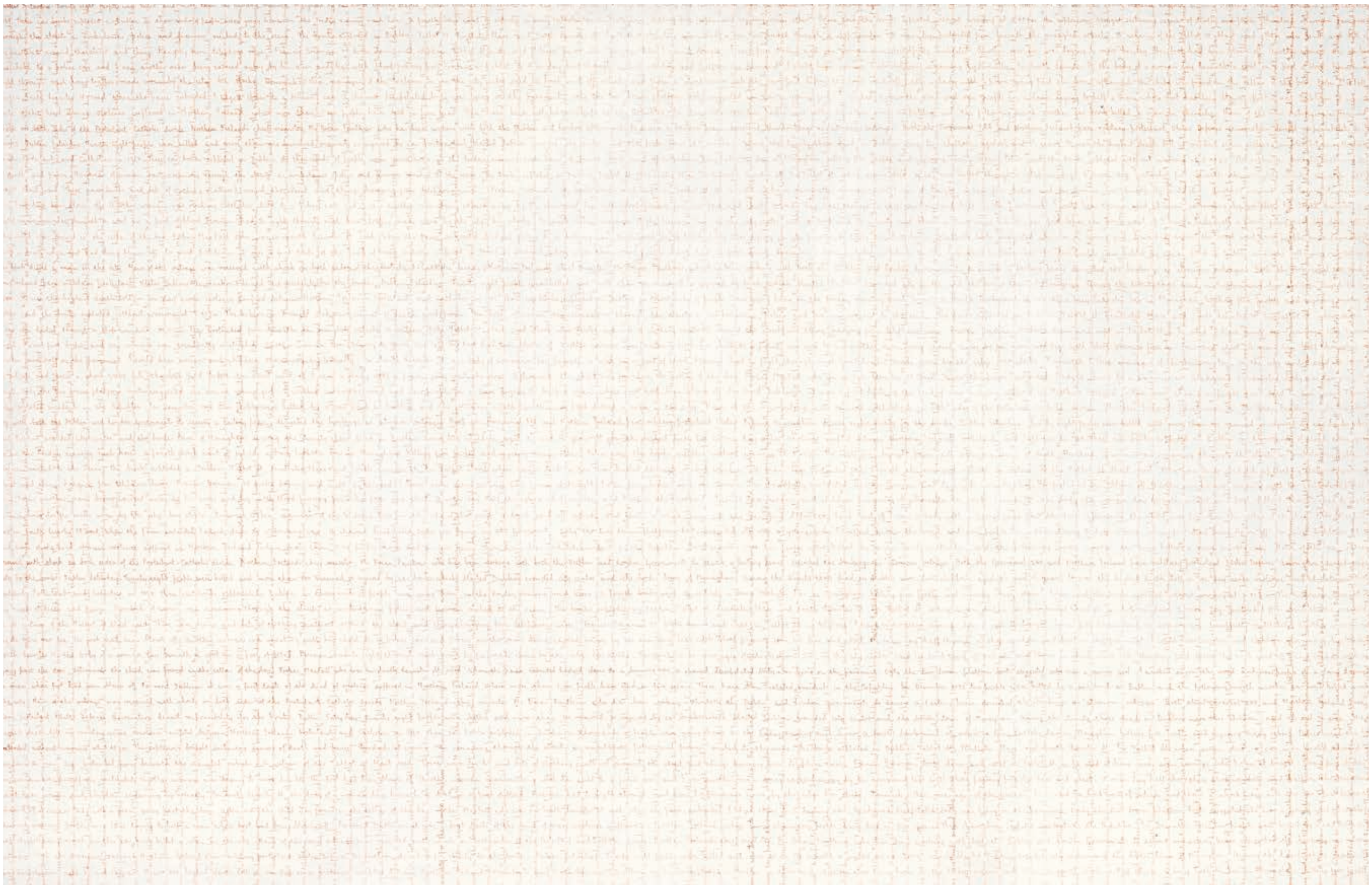
Miriam Stannage, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, 1975
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982 (as ‘Irish Song’)
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
Miriam Stannage: Perception 1969 – 1989, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 20 April – 25 May 1989, cat. 12 (as ‘Irish Song’)
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 25; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 85, p. 98 (illus., as ‘Irish Song’)
Millar, R., ‘A Confident 10 Years’, *The Herald*, Melbourne, 21 October 1982, p. 37
Frangos, S. and Moore, M.,*Miriam Stannage: Perception 1969 – 1989*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 1989, pp. 35 (illus.), 57 (as ‘Irish Song’)
Fenner, F., ‘The Good Life: Paintings lost in the 70s’, *Tamworth Daily Leader*, New South Wales, 1 June 1990
Gallagher, G., and Stannage, M., ‘Miriam Stannage interview, 18 December 2014’, UWA Historical Society: UWA Histories, Perth [https://oralhistories.arts.uwa.edu.au/items/show/88] (accessed 12/1/22)

RELATED WORK

Watergate, 1973 – 74, felt-tipped pen and lead pencil on synthetic polymer on canvas, in the collection of the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth



There is a well-known roll call of modern and contemporary Western Australian artists but one of its most accomplished is perhaps less familiar outside her native state. Emerging to prominence in the 1970s, Miriam Stannage ranks as one of the most thoughtful and experimental artists of her generation. '…Western Australian artists at first abstained when internationalism inspired their counterparts in the eastern states to adopt the severe and simple language of minimal art.'[1] Stannage was perhaps the least reserved when it came to contemporary trends – including conceptualism and minimalism – and what might be useful in her intellectually curious mind and across her diverse application of media.

Stannage's career is one of constant conceptual inventiveness – timidness and equivocation were never part of her temperament. She began as a painter and early in her career was rewarded for it.[2] Her later flat-coloured abstractions hold a variety of interests from a neo-Pop effect to Op and playing with Colourfield formalism. When she was included in the Biennale of Sydney in 1982 and Perspecta, Art Gallery of New South Wales, in 1983 she was regarded as a remarkable photographer and her images remain admired for their idiosyncratic character – often metaphorical, sometimes dark and many imbued with neo-Dada wit.

In the seventies her use of the grid and text drew critical interest.[3] As an artist for whom serialisation and formatted repetition were frequent ways in which she dealt with an idea and her subject, the grid in various guises became a familiar compositional system. Stannage belonged to a generation of Australian artists for whom text was crucial throughout their careers. Ian Burn, Robert MacPherson and Madonna Staunton were each born in or a year or so either side of 1939. Their use of text arises from quite separate intellectual intentions. From Stanton's collaged letter and word ensembles in the seventies, to Burn's work back in Australia after his preoccupation with *Art & Language,* and McPherson's sign and hoarding paintings, each has reminded us of the use of language as holding a purpose and aesthetic that is important to recent decades of Australian art.

Such context helps us place the importance of *News from Dublin* at a critical time in the seventies. It also offers a specific account of her broader artistic inclinations and personal humanitarian instincts[4]; as she reflected, '… most of my work appears to … be concerned with the passage of time and the concerns repeatedly occurring are religion, nature, war, sex and sexuality and art.'[5] *News from Dublin* is a large and beguiling object: it must first interest us as a work of art before we are drawn to the meaning, style and deliberate formatting of the text. This double responsibility is deftly handled. The discreet pencilled grid and the muted softness seem to evoke the same kind of surface manner of Agnes Martin's soft geometric paintings. But *News from Dublin* represents a hideous violence and it is not imaginary. Each line is a verbatim account taken from some of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland's worst episodes. There is no hyperbole: they are almost deadpan matter-of-fact descriptions of sectarian human conduct at its indiscriminate awfulness. The work can be dated with precision: *Another woman was trying to move her legs. Her foot had been blown off. Another woman was rushing with her child to a police car and I saw another man being carried away by his arms and legs with blood pouring from his face and chest.* And on it goes. The same account repeated horizontally and vertically: the Dublin and Monaghan bombings of 17 May 1974.[6]

News from Dublin is pictorially interesting and gripping with its use of language. When we realise what we are reading it has the personality of a strange and beautiful memorial expressed within an astonishing work of art.

1. Stringer, J., *Material and Perfection, Minimal Art & Its Aftermath; selected works from the Kerry Stokes Collection*, Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth, 1998, p.32
2. Stannage was awarded the Albany Art Prize in 1970. Bernard Smith was its judge and nominated her for a Power Institute Residency, Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, which she took up in 1971
3. *The Grid Show/A Structured Space*, Ewing Gallery, Melbourne University, 1975.
4. For a fuller personal account see: Kinsella, L., *Tribute – Miriam Stannage 1939 – 2016*, Art Monthly Australia, Summer 2016 – 17, p. 78
5. Stannage cited in Ennis, H., *Miriam Stannage, Perception 1969 – 1989*, Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, 1989, p. 17
6. Wikipedia records 1974 and each attack. Another detailed record of the conflict is CAIN Archive [online], Ulster University, Northern Ireland.

DOUG HALL AM

MIRIAM STANNAGE:
SURVEY 2006 - 2016

Miriam Stannage at the exhibition
'Miriam Stannage: Survey 2006 - 2016',
Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, Perth
photographer unknown

JANET DAWSON

44

born 1935
LAST FOXY NIGHT, 1979
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
183.5 x 121.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
Janet Dawson / Last Foxy Night / 5/79

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

PROVENANCE

Gallery A, Sydney (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in June 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Janet Dawson, Recent Paintings, Gallery A, Sydney, 19 May – 9 June 1979
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 9; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990
Hidden Treasures: Art in Sydney's Corporate Collections, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, 12 January – 19 February 1994

LITERATURE

Plant, M., 'Janet Dawson' in *Art and Australia*, Fine Arts Press, Sydney, vol. 17, no. 4, winter 1980, p. 344
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 29, p. 42 (illus.)
Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980*, Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 83 (illus.)

RELATED WORKS

Foxy Night 1, 1977, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 122.2 x 243.8 cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth
Foxy Night 2, 1977, synthetic polymer paint on linen canvas, 182.5 x 121.5 cm, in the collection of the Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane
Study for Foxy Night Series, 1978 – 79, pencil, gouache and wash on paper, 29.2 x 39.5 cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

Dawson occupies a rare and remarkable place in Australian art, one which has included painter – from student tonalist to semi-abstraction to avant garde modernist – and a return to naturalism. A superb draughtsperson throughout her career, a master printmaker and a designer in various forms.[1] Her prodigious talent was evident from her late teens winning various awards as a student at the National Gallery of Victoria Art School. In 1956, she won the NGV's Travelling Scholarship which took to her London where she enrolled at the Slade School of Fine Art. In London, Dawson encountered the work of Rothko and Motherwell, and in Paris, Dubuffet and Miró, each leaving a strong impression. After her return to Australia in 1961, her confidence in vibrant colours, abstract forms and flat surfaces created paintings that were fresh and distinctive and attracted widespread critical attention, particularly through her association with Gallery A (Sydney and Melbourne).

Dawson is often cited as one of three women artists included in the National Gallery of Victoria's *The Field* exhibition. The domination of abstraction by men was obvious and something that Feminism in Sydney and Melbourne took to task in the following decade. But 'Dawson's most Field-like paintings were not in 'The Field' – they had preceded it.[2] Her contribution, *Rollascape,* is a shaped canvas and using a roller is painted in a muted orange.[3] In one sense it anticipates the paintings which followed, including her *Foxy Night* series with their use of half-tones and illusion of subtle depth.

In 1973, Dawson and her husband moved to Binalong, and in 1977 to nearby Scribble Rock, both about an hour north-east of Canberra.[4] The *Foxy Night* paintings were borne out of the location itself. Dawson is untroubled by abstraction and naturalism occurring in a comfortable sequence – for her, they have seldom been opposites or competing forces with one effortlessly following the other. *Last Foxy Night*, 1979 is similar in style and treatment to other *Foxy* works in public collections.[5] The slipping and cascading poise of shapes are held within a briskly painted surface and muted palette. The soft atmospheric effect seems almost Whistlerian in its nocturnal tonal range. Here we find the synthesis of Dawson's observation and the feeling for her location, interwoven with her own intellectual and aesthetic disposition.

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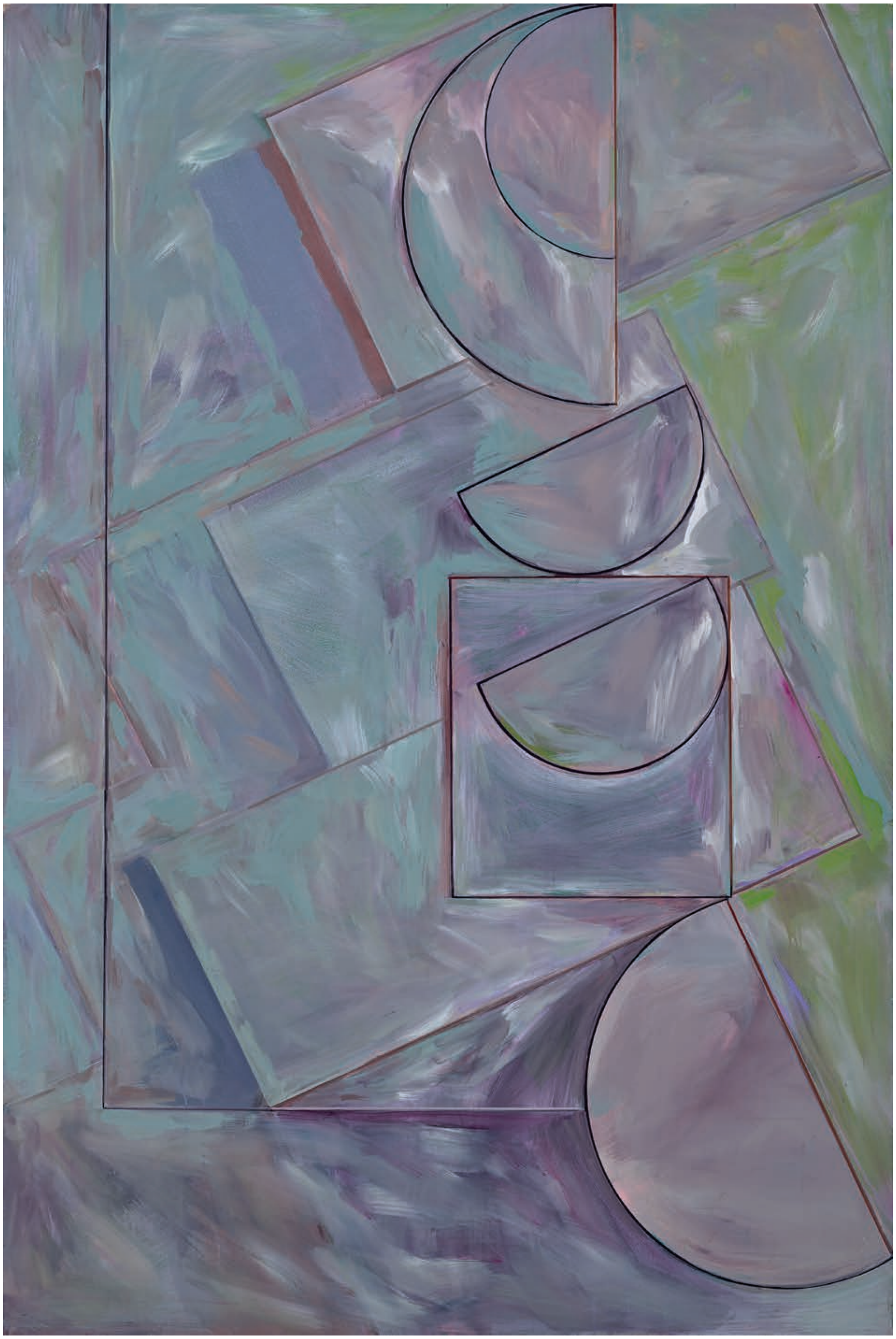
1. *Self Portrait,* painted between 1951 and 1953 (before the artist was twenty), oil on cardboard, collection of the National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
2. Thomas, D., 'Golden Oldies. Four artists who were new in the 1960s and early 1970s and still going strong', *Art & Australia*, vol 50, no. 4, Autumn 2013, p. 385
3. *Rollascape*, 1968, synthetic polymer paint on composition board, collection of the Art Gallery of Ballarat, Victoria
4. Michael Boddy (1934 – 2014), English-Australian actor and writer, married Dawson, in Sydney, 1965. He was the subject of Dawson's Archibald Prize winning portrait in 1973.
5. *Foxy night 2*, 1977, synthetic polymer paint on linen canvas, collection of the Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, purchased 1977, Trustees' Prize (winning entry); *Study for Foxy night series*, 1978-1979, pencil, black ink wash, white gouache on white wove paper, collection of the Art Gallery New South Wales, Sydney, Gift of Peta Phillips, 2001

DOUG HALL AM



INGE KING

45

(1915 – 2016)
PLANET, 2009
stainless steel
73.0 x 82.0 x 65.0 cm
signed with initials at base: IK

ESTIMATE: $40,000 – 60,000

PROVENANCE

Australian Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from above in 2009 (label attached to base)

EXHIBITED

Inge King: Sculpture: Maquettes and Recent Work, Australian Galleries, Melbourne, July – September 2009

LITERATURE

Grishin, S., *The Art of Inge King Sculptor*, Macmillan Art Publishing, Melbourne, 2014, pp. 280 – 281 (illus.), 358, 379
Scarlett, K., 'Tough and Dedicated', *Australian Art Review*, Sydney, February – April 2010, p. 48 (illus.)

RELATED WORKS

Rings of Saturn, 2005 – 06, stainless steel, 450.0 x 450.0 x 450.0 cm, in the collection of the Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
Sun Dance, 2009, stainless steel, 89.0 x 126.0 x 107.0 cm, in the collection of Central Steel Equity, Melbourne

At the time of her death in 2016 at the age of 100, Inge King's work had transformed her hometown of Melbourne, with her monumental sculptures such as *Forward Surge*, 1974 at the Arts Centre, *Shearwater*, 1994 – 95 at Southbank, and *Sentinel*, 2000 on the Eastern Freeway, becoming iconic city markers – recognised by tens of thousands of people, even if they remained unaware of the name or extraordinary achievements of the artist who made them.

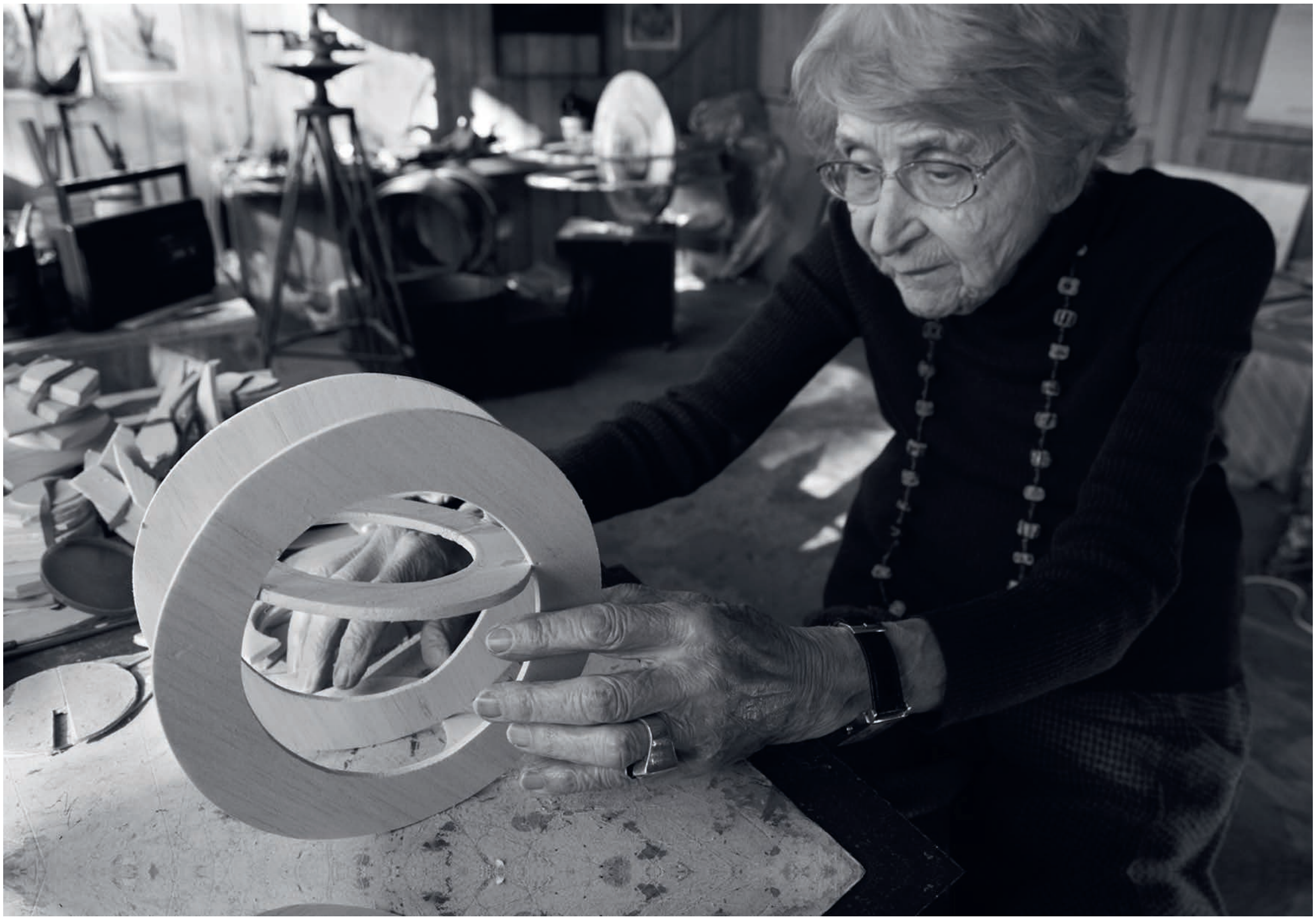
When King emigrated to Australia with husband and fellow artist Grahame in 1951, she had already trained in Berlin, Glasgow, London and New York, accumulating considerable experience as a sculptor. Just two years later, she was one of the founding members of the Group of Four (along with Julius Kane, Clifford Last and Norma Redpath), which was established with the collective desire to create a sympathetic relationship between modern abstract sculpture and architecture. The Group was joined by Vincas Jomantas, Lenton Parr and Teisutis Zikaras in 1961[1], becoming Centre 5 – a seminal coterie that continued to champion a greater appreciation of modern sculpture and the inclusion of ambitious sculpture in contemporary Australian architecture.

As one of the first Australian sculptors to learn to weld[2], King began to work exclusively in welded steel from the mid-1960s, creating work that could withstand Australia's harsh conditions and hold its own in what seemed to her to then be a 'strange, untidy landscape.'[3] However, over time, she came to love and better the understand the Australian bush, with its cast of unique birds becoming part of her lexicon of totemic figures in the 1990s. As art historian Jane Eckett has surmised, 'Her sculptures arose simultaneously from international modernism and from local environments, both natural and urban. With their monumental forms and impeccably smooth surfaces, they appeared products of a high formalist aesthetic. Yet her work refused such compartmentalisation, regularly returning to the figurative and the improvised, experimental – even joyful – nature of assemblage. Inge herself wisely accepted these contradictions, charry of rigid theorems'.[4]

Planet, 2009 is part of a series of ambitious 'interstellar' sculptures known as the *Celestial Rings*, 2004 – 14 which were inspired by televised images of outer space transmitted from the Hubble Telescope.[5] These works were initially conceived in balsa wood by King and then cast in bronze and used as maquettes for larger works which were created by experienced fabricators. At scale, their commanding presence conveys an artist at the height of her powers; one with an extraordinary formal capacity, technical knowledge, and uncompromising eye. As she has said, 'With the *Celestial Rings* series I begin by working on a small scale because it's fast. Also, by doing this I am able to discover what will work on a large scale. I have a definite feeling for scale – I have a definite instinct of what will enlarge and what will not'.[6] With its intersecting rings and planes of highly polished stainless steel, *Planet* encapsulates a sense of energy and movement, encouraging the viewer to do the same. This is a work to be experienced bodily, and in the round.

1. The exact date of Centre 5's formation has been long contested. This is the date ascertained by Jane Eckett from Lenton Parr's diaries in his papers in the State Library of Victoria, Melbourne. See Eckett, J. 'Binary Star: Inge and Graham King' in Hurlston, D. & Eckett, J., *Inge King: Constellation*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, footnote 60, p. 119
2. Scarlett, K., 'Tough and Dedicated', *Australian Art Review*, Sydney, February – April 2010, p. 48
3. Lancashire, R., *The Age*, 31 September 1992 as quoted at https://igking.info/inge-king-2/inge-king-the-early-years/ (viewed 18 December 2021)
4. Eckett, J., 'Inge King: Full Circle' in *Inge King 26 November 1915 – 23 April 2016*, booklet for memorial held at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 9 May 2016, n.p. See http://igking.info/wp-content/uploads/memorial-booklet.pdf (viewed 18 December 2021)
5. Eckett, J., 'Inge King Memorial Service', http://igking.info/wp-content/uploads/Inge-King-eulogy-Jane-Eckett.pdf (viewed 18 December 2021) This series also includes the monumental public sculpture *Rings of Saturn*, 2005 – 06, which is situated at the entrance of Melbourne's Heide Museum of Modern Art.
6. Hurlston, & Eckett, op. cit., p. 90

KELLY GELLATLY



Inge King in her studio, Warrandyte
photographer: Jacqui Henshaw

46

HOWARD ARKLEY

(1951 – 1999)
STROKE, 1975
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
184.5 x 163.5 cm

ESTIMATE: $20,000 – 30,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Howard Arkley, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, 23 April – May 1975, cat. 4 (as 'Static/Dynamic Opposition, 1974') or 5 (as 'Impetus')
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Howard Arkley – It's In The Can, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, 8 October – 30 November 1991

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 2, p. 15 (illus.)
Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980*, Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 185 (illus.)
Hart, D., *William Delafield Cook,* Craftsman House, Sydney, 1998, p. 119
Howard Arkley Online Catalogue Raisonné: [https://www.arkleyworks.com/blog/2009/11/11/stroke–1975/] (accessed 22/11/21)

RELATED WORK

Seltsamer, 1975, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 183.2 x 163.8 cm, in the collection of the Castlemaine Art Gallery, Victoria

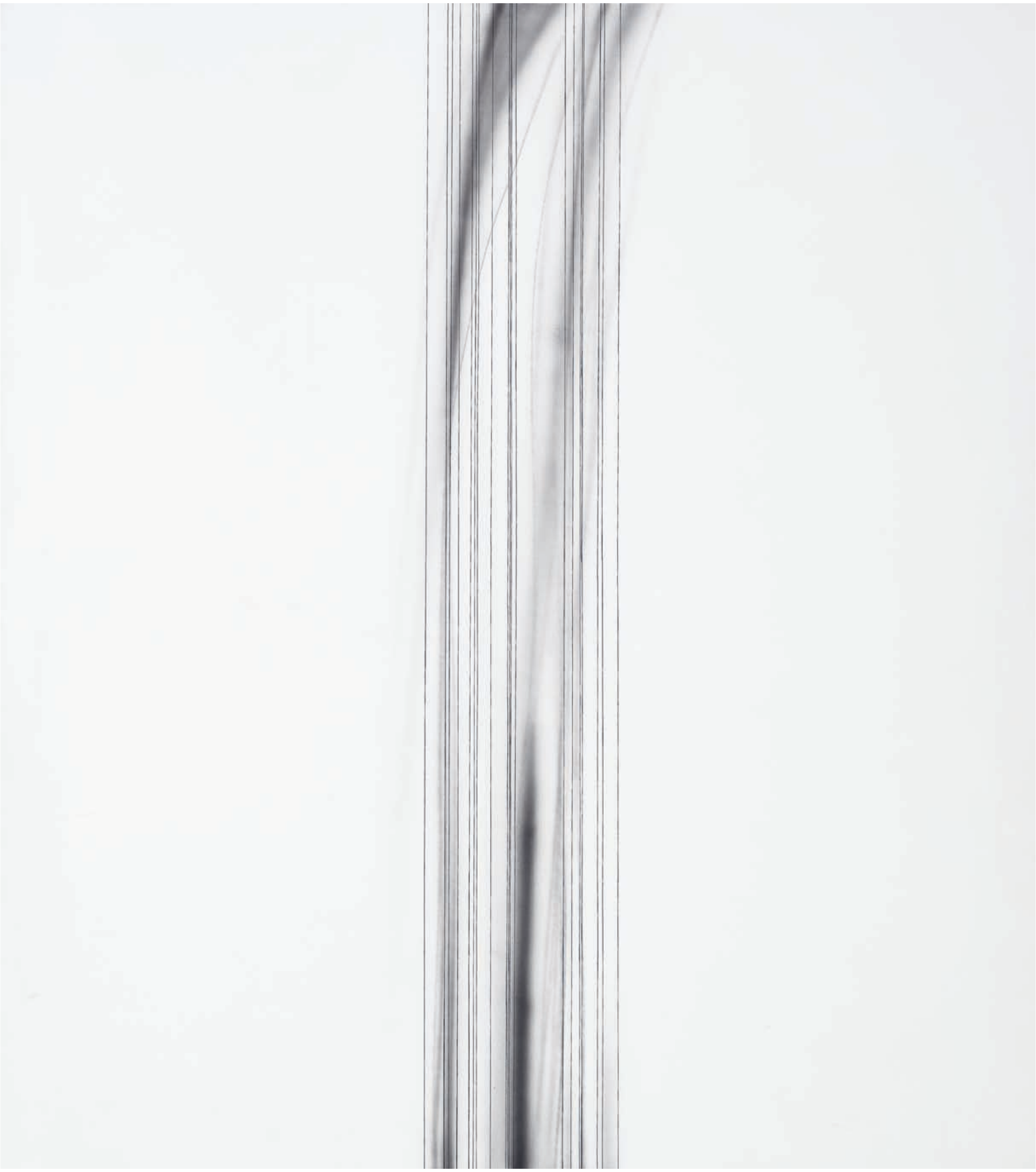
While seemingly far-removed from the high-keyed riotous colour of Howard Arkley's signature works, with their airbrushed black outlining and strong areas of patterning and decoration, in *Stroke*, 1975 we can already witness Arkley's ability to knowingly push accepted conventions. Painted during a time in which American art critic Clement Greenberg's formalist agenda still held considerable sway, Arkley's introduction of airbrushed gestural elements into a 'flat' abstract painting entirely devoid of the creator's hand, subtly conveys the sense of an artist who is uninterested in playing by the rules. Arkley's monochromatic work like *Stroke*, produced from 1974 – 76 (with the works on paper continuing to 1978[1]) drew on a vast array of sources, ranging from modernist art theory, philosophy and science and eastern spiritualism to the influence of a variety of artists, including Malevich, Robert Morris, and Arkley's Australian contemporary, Robert Hunter (1947 – 2014). This grab-bag approach to inspiration, drawn from 'high' and 'low' culture and the everyday, were to remain a key characteristic of the artist's work throughout his all-too brief but prolific career.

Stroke was included in Arkley's first solo exhibition at George Mora's Tolarno Galleries in St Kilda in April 1975, just two years after he had completed a Diploma of Art & Design (Painting) at Melbourne's Prahran College of Advanced Education.[2] This exhibition showcased Arkley's now celebrated 'White Paintings', which he had commenced in 1974, comprising a sophisticated and elegant investigation of the possibilities of contemporary abstraction and mark-making within the self-imposed parameters of a palette restricted solely to black and white. This was an important formative time for the artist and, as his sketchbooks and drawings from the period attest, one in which he could freewheel and experiment, developing upon the intellectual and social movements he was introduced to during his studies (feminism, conceptualism and elements of 1970s avant-garde practice and theory). Returning in 1981 to the statement he penned to accompany the exhibition, Arkley wrote: '… The selection of elements in my paintings is taken with great restraint. I slowly introduce basic plastic elements in a meditative way. I would like to be aware of every possibility before proceeding with new moves. I would like to work with a computer. Line: fat/thin. Tone: monochromatic/colour. Texture: soft/hard. Shape: Square/round. Movement: static/dynamic. etc. Through following these ideas I have been able to identify and use a strong personal feeling towards line. I draw rather than paint'.[3]

Arkley was invited to join Tolarno's stable of artists the year after this first exhibition, introducing him to senior Australian figures such as John Brack (1930 – 99), along with a coterie of artists including Juan Davila and Constanze Zikos, who would go on to play important roles in his life as both friends and collaborators.

1. See Arkley Works, https://www.arkleyworks.com/white-works-on-paper-c-1974-78/ (viewed 11 December 2021)
2. *Stroke* may have been exhibited under another title in this first Tolarno exhibition. See Arkley Works: https://www.arkleyworks.com/blog/2009/11/11/stroke-1975/3. Gregory, J., *Carnival in Suburbia: The Art of Howard Arkley*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2006, p. 2
3. Arkley, H., 'Artist's Statement', *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 15

KELLY GELLATLY



DON RAMETTE

47

born 1939
UNTITLED IN BLUE, 1976
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
152.5 x 112.0 cm
signed and dated verso: Ramette 76

ESTIMATE: $2,000 – 3,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1976 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

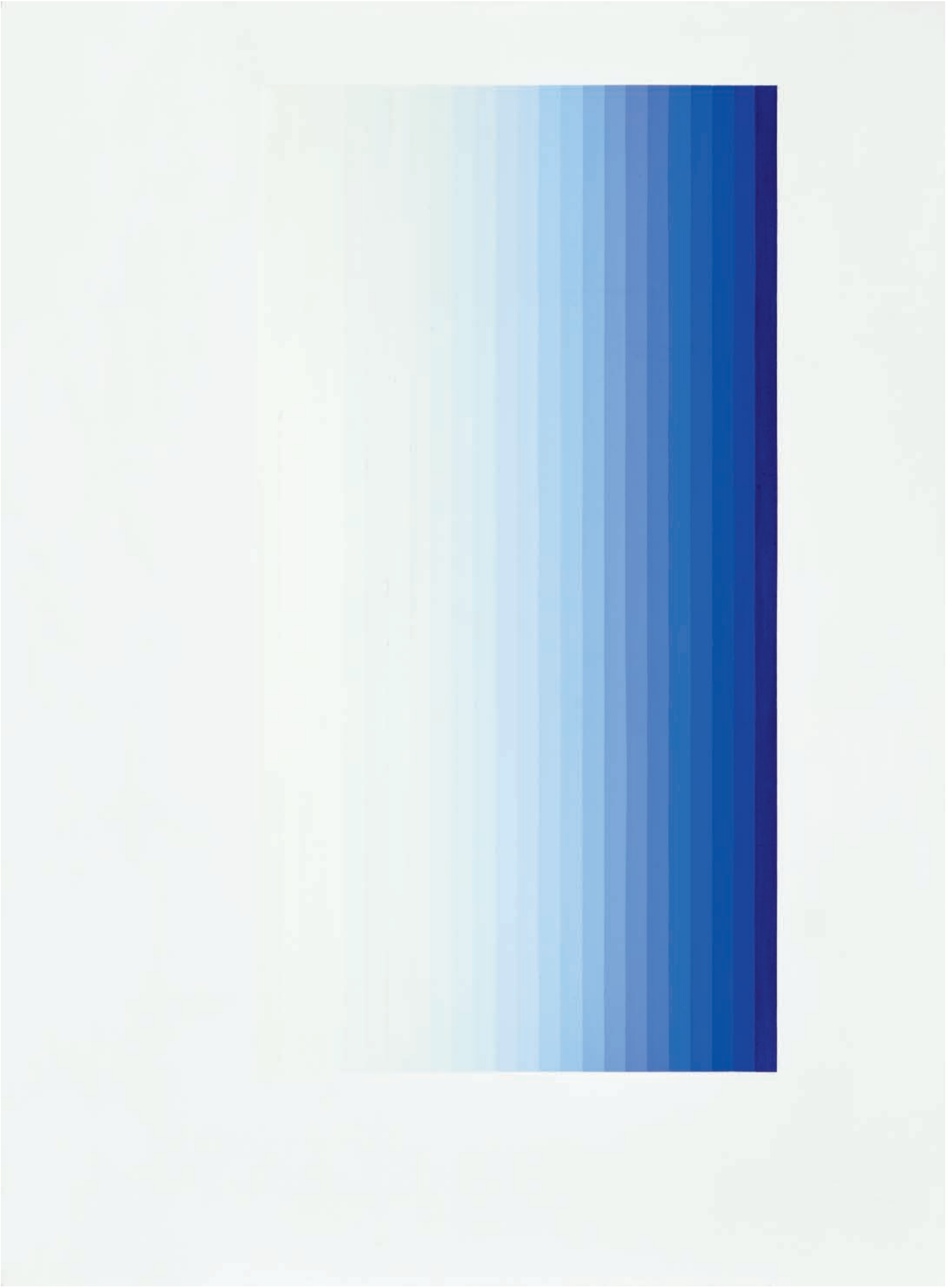
Minimal Paintings and Sculptures, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, 1976
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 75, p. 88 (illus.)

‘The goal in my art consists of the expression of a single emotion at its ultimate intensity. The apparently empty spaces play at least as important a role as those which are filled as it is through the relationship between the plain and more complex areas that the energy and movement essential to the tangible expression of the emotion become visible. The implied space of depth is as important as that of the actual two-dimensional surface. Most important of all is the act of manipulating and distorting visually the physical space of the work. The contrast between the colour and the plain background accomplishes this, while it is through the colour itself that I convey the type of emotion I am portraying. My minimal work forced me to concentrate upon presenting an intense emotional message within a very simple format and imbuing a formal, geometric image with energy and depth and paved the way for the more complex structures which followed.’

1. The artist, cited in Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p.75



ALUN LEACH–JONES

48

(1937 – 2017)
CREAM OVER RED, c.1976
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
152.5 x 152.5 cm
signed on stretcher bar verso: Alun Leach–Jones
inscribed with title on stretcher bar verso: 'CREAM OVER RED'
bears inscription on stretcher verso: CAT NO 7

ESTIMATE: $5,000 – 8,000

PROVENANCE

Possibly: Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1976 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 58, p. 71 (illus.)

RELATED WORK

Red and Cream to Green, 1976, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152.0 x 152.0 cm, private collection

Alun Leach-Jones' work is characterised by crisp geometric Hard-edged areas of bright colours. This precision is a heritage of his silkscreen printing experience of the 1960s combined with a highly analytical approach to painting and a systematic methodical attitude to producing art. The 'Noumenon' series (meaning an object of intellectual intuition), dating from approximately 1966 to 1970 which established Leach-Jones' reputation as a major Colourfield painter exploited a circle-within-square format reminiscent of Albers' square-within-a-square series, and provided a vehicle for working colour on colour without the need to worry about format. From 1966 onwards Leach-Jones' works gradually increased in size, the central circular area with its patterned worm-like motifs becoming increasingly more decorative, flat patterned and colourful, until the 1970s when he began incorporating "trompe l'oeil" patterned areas into the central patterned area. The worm-like shapes of these areas were gradually simplified into coloured bands and arcs isolated on muted ochre or red monochrome backgrounds as in *Cream over Red*. This general move towards simplification was sympathetic to the changed climate of the 1970s with the emergence of the Minimal Aesthetic.'[1]

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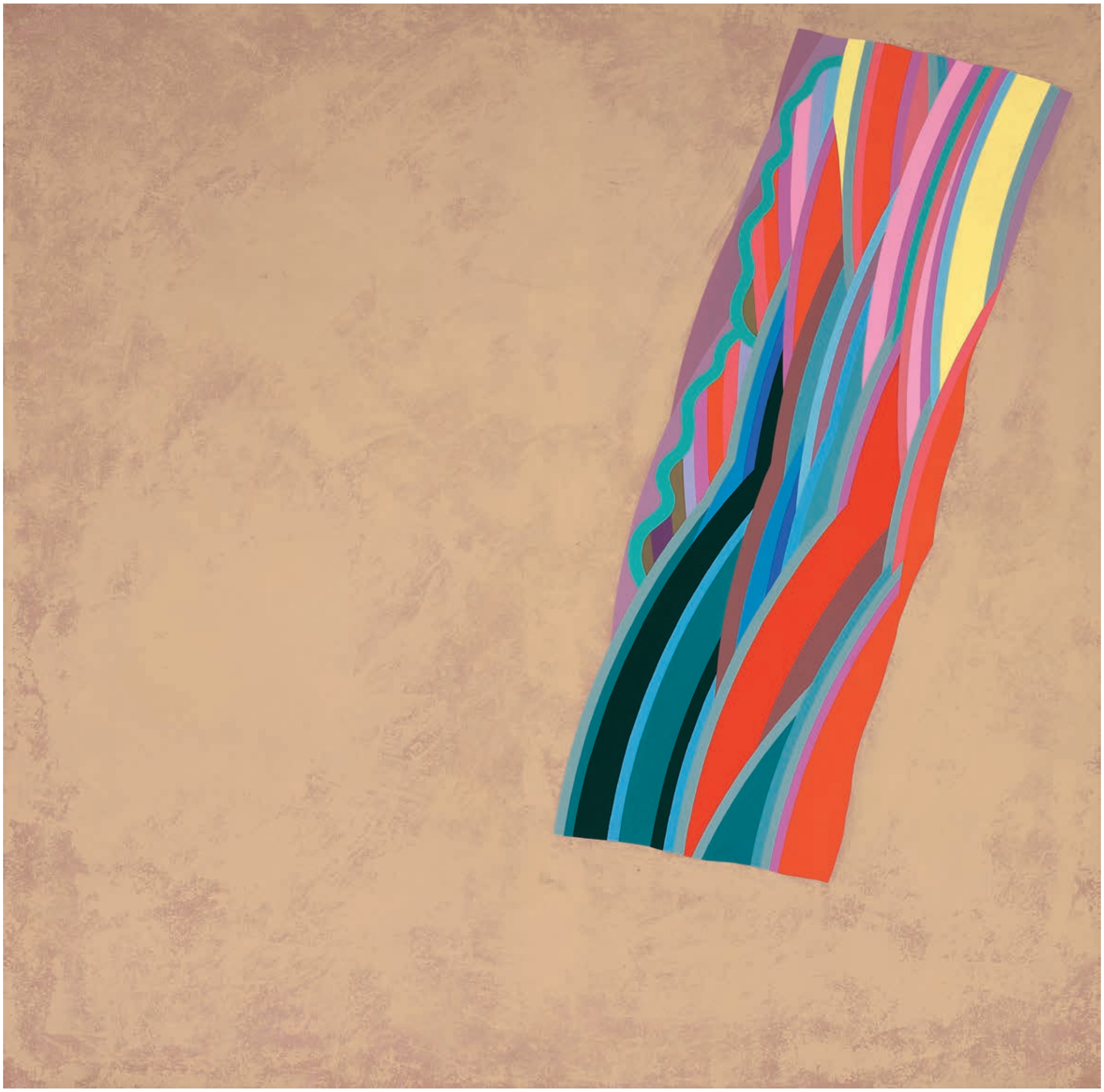
1. Lindsay, R., The Seventies: *Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 71



RICHARD LARTER

49

(1929 – 2014)
SHIFT, 1978
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
185.5 x 142.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: R. LARTER / 3. 10. 1978.
signed, dated and inscribed with title on stretcher bar verso:
RICHARD LARTER "SHIFT" 1978

ESTIMATE: $6,000 – 9,000

PROVENANCE

Watters Gallery, Sydney
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in April 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

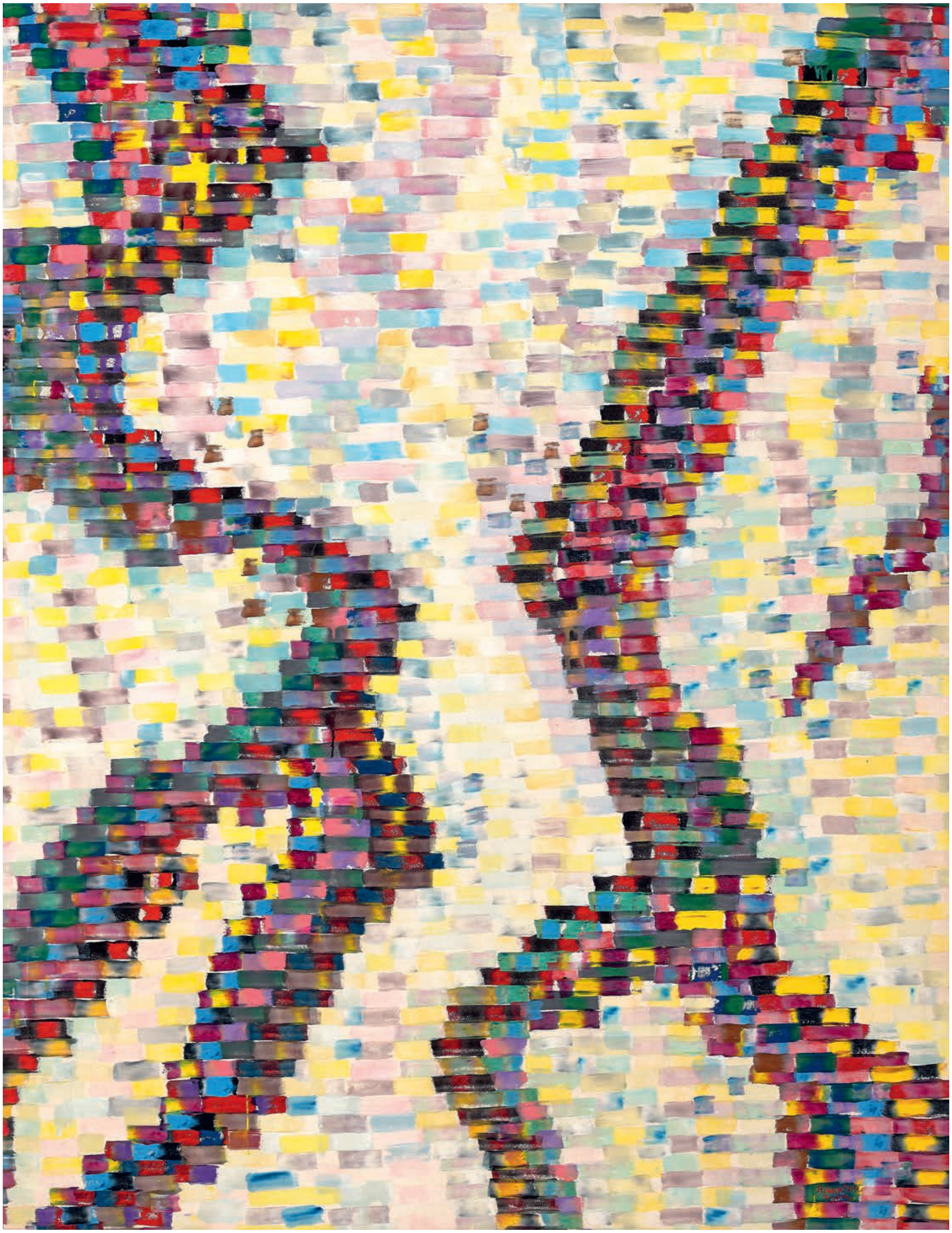
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 56, p. 69 (illus.)

'From the late 1950s, Richard Larter produced a series of provocative Pop images based on the nude in aggressively erotic poses. He used a technique of drawing with a hypodermic needle filled with paint, however this linear style changed in the mid 1960s to a commercial art Popo style with simple areas of flat colour and clear crisp outlines and increasing emphasis on patternmaking between the figurative images. In the late 1970s Richard Larter began to concentrate on purely abstract works, of which *Shift* is a good example. The horizontal brush and "squeegeed" bands of paint are analogous to a musical score that can be read from left to right, with the "shift" of emphasis moving vertically in the construction of the work.'[1]

1. Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 69



JOHN PEART

50

(1945 – 2013)
PARADISE POINT, 1976
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
170.5 x 231.0 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
“PARADISE POINT” / 1976 / John Peart

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

PROVENANCE

Watters Gallery, Sydney
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1976 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Probably: *John Peart*, Watters Gallery, Sydney, September 1976
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
John Peart – Paintings 1964 – 2004, Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney, 2005 – 2006, and touring to Drill Hall Gallery, Melbourne; Australian National University, Canberra; Lawrence Wilson Art Gallery, University of Western Australia, Perth; Burnie Regional Art Gallery, Tasmania; and Campbelltown City Bicentennial Art Gallery, New South Wales

LITERATURE

Faerber, R., ‘Less says More’, *The Australian Jewish Times*, Sydney, 2 September 1976, p. 14
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 72, p. 85 (illus.)
Porter, R., *John Peart – Paintings 1964 – 2004,* Campbelltown Arts Centre, Sydney, 2004, pp. 38 (illus.), 72
Frost, J., ‘John Peart: still exploring’, *Artist Profile,* Sydney, issue 17, 2011, p. 74

John Peart was perhaps Australia’s most consistent abstract painter, exhibiting loyally at Sydney’s Watters Gallery from the age of 19 until his untimely death in 2013, mercifully before Watters itself ceased operations. Originally from Brisbane, Peart moved to Sydney in the early 60s, during which time he won several art prizes and works acquired for public collections, before embarking on a study tour of the UK, Europe and America, from 1969 – 1972. Upon his return, Peart exhibited selections of large abstract paintings alongside those painted more recently in Sydney, first at Canberra’s Abraxas Gallery in July 1976, at Watters’ in September 1976, and then in Melbourne’s Realities gallery in April in 1977.

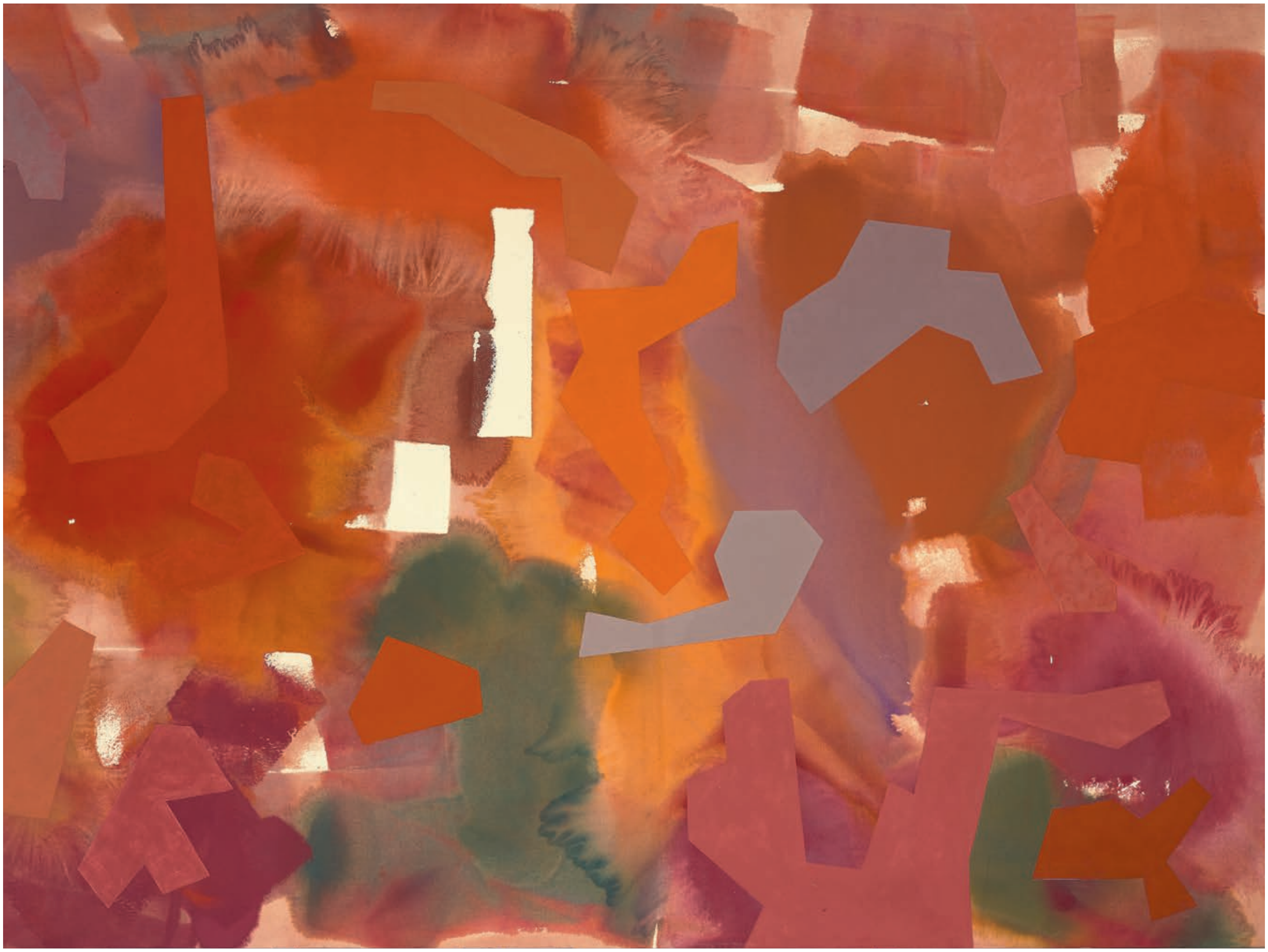
Paradise Point, 1976 is a lyrical and diaphanous stain painting, made of a mist of vibrant acrylic paint in rich ochres, mauves and misty greens shifting across the vast surface. The amorphous flow of translucent washes pooling and bleeding into one another is broken by the hard lines of Peart’s overlaid floating shapes of solid colour. This sudden punctuation and alternation gives a dynamic rhythm to *Paradise Point*. Intensity and pictorial energy are key to Peart’s practice, and constant experimentation and philosophical interrogation enabled his pursuit of these qualities in his work. This process of concealing and revealing he described as an ‘evolving or active superimposed ground’, where background and foreground are not easily defined.[1]

Peart’s local form of post-painterly abstraction had eclectic influences, ranging from the works of reclusive stalwart Ian Fairweather to the Colour Field works of Americans Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland (seen in the exhibition *Two Decades of American Painting*, at the Art Gallery New South Wales in 1967). In the early 1960s, Peart read the philosophy of Advianta Vedanta and *The First and Last Freedom* (1954), by renowned Hindu Tantric teacher Jiddu Krishnamurti – their mystic teachings, in particular those relating to the search for ‘irreducible truth’ through the enlightened mind.[2] These teachings were fresh when *Paradise Point* was painted, as Peart stopped in India on his return to Australia in 1972, the artist inspired to now imagine the pictorial space as an inner landscape for the mind’s eye to roam.[3]

In an artist’s statement from 1982, Peart explained the tongue-in-cheek title he gave this painting, relating at once to his own deeply subjective painting practice and the posh waterfront suburb of the Gold Coast by the same name: ‘The title *Paradise Point* reminds me both of the transcendental and the mundane. It represents partly the euphoria aroused in me by the finished painting and partly real estate jargon.’[4]

1. Peart, cited in Van Nunen, L. ‘Patterns of Experience. Sydney Abstraction’ in *Brought to Light II, Contemporary Australian Art 1966 – 2006*, Queensland Art Gallery, 2007, p. 38
2. ibid, p. 35
3. Peart, cited in *The Challenge of Landscape*, New England Regional Art Museum, December 1987
4. Peart, 1982, cited in Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of the National Bank of Australia*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 85

LUCIE REEVES-SMITH



DAVID ASPDEN

51

(1935 – 2005)
FALLEN TREE, 1976
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
235.0 x 156.5 cm

ESTIMATE: $20,000 – 30,000

PROVENANCE

Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

David Aspden: Paintings, prints and collages, Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney, 23 June – 18 July 1979
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988

LITERATURE

Nicholson, M., 'Price of Freedom', *The Bulletin*, Sydney, vol. 98, no. 5004, 24 April 1976, p. 53
The First Gallery in Paddington. The artists and their work tell the story of the Rudy Komon Art Gallery, Edwards & Shaw, Sydney, 1981, p. 16 (illus.)
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 3, p. 16 (illus.)
Taylor, P., *Anything Goes: Art in Australia 1970 – 1980*, Art & Text, Melbourne, 1984, p. 41 (illus.)

David Aspden is not the only Australian artist to be lauded as an exceptional Colourfield painter whose work later softened to become lyrical, at times poetic. According to a review of an exhibition at the time of his death, 'Australia has never had a better abstract painter.' The reviewer named names - those he thought Aspden surpassed.[1]

Aspden's colourfield work was sufficiently different in approach and he avoided being typecast as a remote New York acolyte: he was interested in 'space as colour, not just colour' and when he represented Australia at the São Paulo Biennial in 1971 his surfaces had become large, coloured interlocking shapes with irregular serrated edges.[2] Aspden has acknowledged that many traits were lifted directly from years as a sign writer and painter in Wollongong.

A shift soon followed São Paulo where shapes or an edge, anywhere had gone completely. Surfaces dissolved into all-over painterliness where the process itself took over – pouring, dripping, splattering and the application of paint suggests the absence or directness of the artist's hand. Despite Aspden's skilled draughtsmanship he always sought to free painting from drawing as much as possible.

A decade of apparent deviations might seem somewhat unusual, but it is not unique. We might see Ralph Balson (1890 – 1964) in the same light - from his *Constructive* geometric paintings in the forties and early fifties to his daubed *Painting* and writhing *Matter* paintings from the late fifties and early sixties, respectively.[3]

Fallen Tree marks a phase that was never lost or abandoned. The deliberate painting technique and the reference to nature is clear on first glance and is given in the title. The camouflage effect suggests a means to avoid literalism, to allow the subject that inspired the painting to be concentrated and emphasised. It is an approach which occurs in many guises and palette ranges over the next three decades. In his final exhibition Aspden offered a succinct summary:
'… in this exhibition a great deal of reference to landscape and the environment. I am challenged by the colours that can be found in the air, wind and weather, as well as more easily recognizable colours in the tangible world of nature.'[4]

Aspden was a serious Jazz devotee. In his work from the seventies, we sense a spontaneity and improvisation and here in *Fallen Tree* a visual orchestration of muted tones, reflected upon, then developed and refined in the making of the painting itself.

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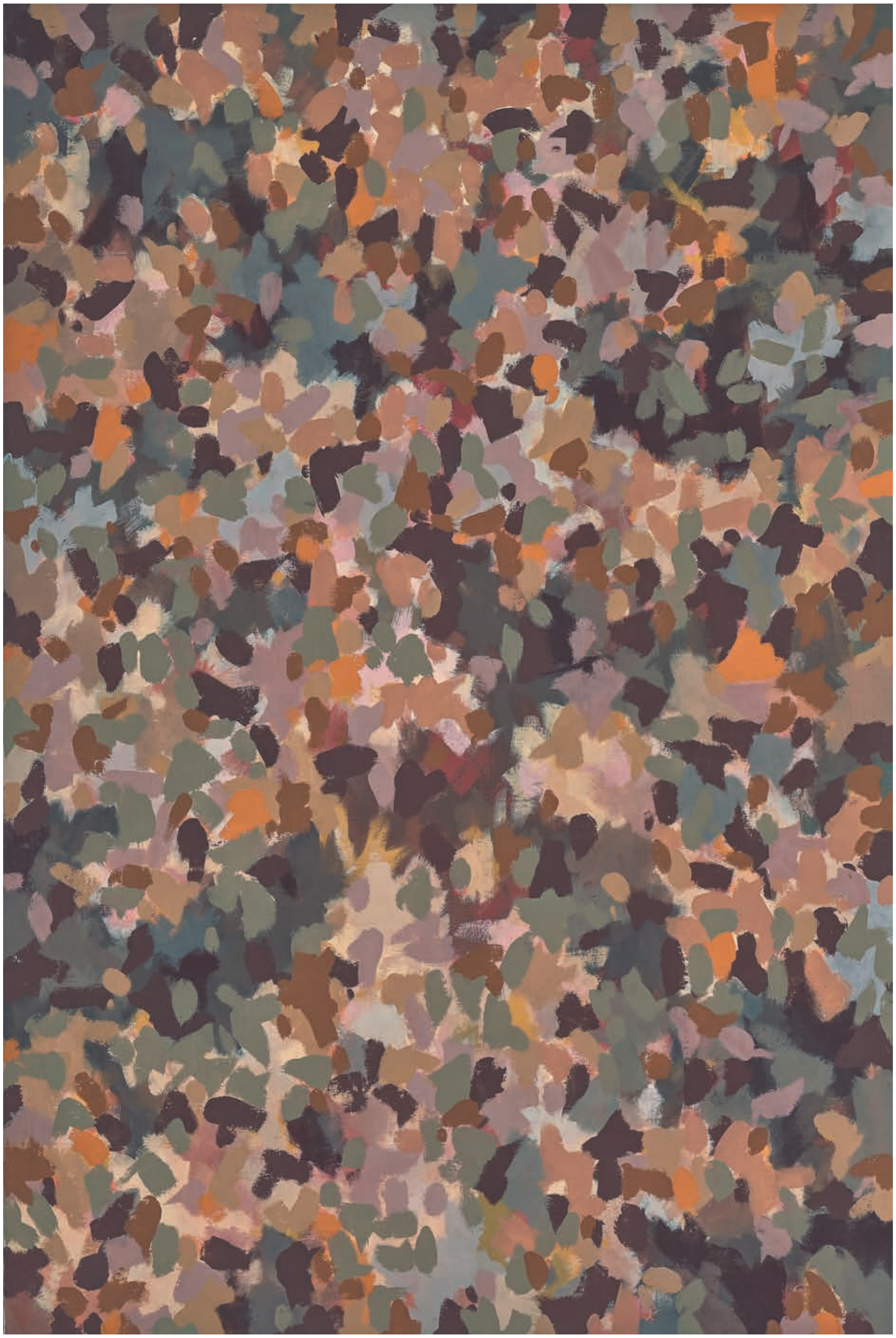
1. Smee, S., 'National Art Critic', T*he Australian: Review*, 12 July 2005
2. Australia XI Bienal de *São* Paulo, 1971. Aspden represented Australia with Gunter Christmann; the former was awarded a Gold Medal.
3. *Constructive painting*, 1947, oil on composition board, collection of the Queensland Art Gallery / Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, purchased 1984; *Painting No 9*, 1959, synthetic polymer paint on hardboard, collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, purchased 1960; *Matter Painting*, 1961, synthetic polymer paint and concrete on hardboard, collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, gift of Chris and Susannah Turle 2013
4. *David Aspden, Paintings 1973 – 2005*, Wagner Gallery, Sydney, 9 July – 4 August 2005

DOUG HALL AM



JOHN FIRTH–SMITH

52

born 1943
RED REFLECTION, 1979
oil on canvas
91.0 x 182.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title on stretcher bar verso:
“RED REFLECTION” / Firth–Smith 79
bears artist’s stamp on stretcher bar verso

ESTIMATE: $12,000 – 18,000

PROVENANCE

Gallery A, Sydney (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in October 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

John Firth–Smith, Gallery A, Sydney, 16 June – 7 July 1979
Structures, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, New South Wales, March 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
‘The Seventies’ Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection ‘Modern Art of the Seventies’, Caulfield Arts Complex, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 8

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 38, p. 51 (illus.)

When John Firth-Smith first secured a substantive profile from the late sixties, he was not only one amongst a new generation of Australian abstractionists, but he also witnessed the spirited arguments about what contemporary Australia abstraction might look like. His career reminds us that the finest painterly abstraction was never a stylistic fling with New York, and indeed Firth-Smith’s nuanced opus remains essential to five decades of Australian painting.

Before the energetic exuberance of *Red Reflection*, 1979, Firth-Smith’s paintings were large, spacious and saturated in colour. His intuitive sense in developing a painting meant he remained removed from his Sydney Colour-Form contemporaries. The somewhat doctrinaire group at Sydney’s Central Street Galleries held faith in hard-edge formalism and hoped it would find them international acceptance. They enjoyed strident advocacy from Terry Smith, then an emerging Sydney critic and political-cultural activist.[1] Firth-Smith wasn’t included in the National Gallery of Victoria’s *The Field* exhibition of 1968.

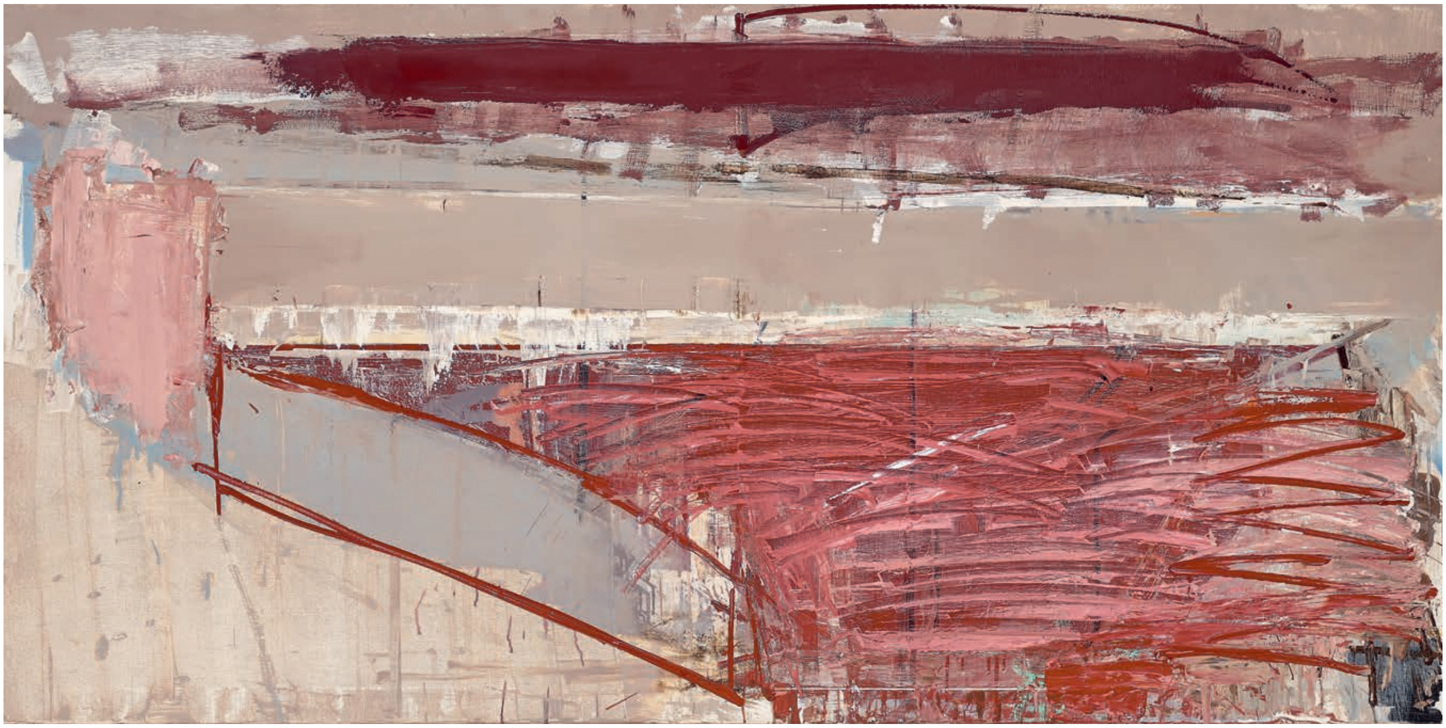
After time in New York, in 1971 he returned to Sydney and his first diagonal paintings began. These vast horizontal canvases not only exuded a confidence and certainty which was hugely admired, but also resolved matters dealing with the architecture of the paintings themselves, space and the context of his work within contained physical space.[2] They are moreover instructive in revealing a working foundation for the paintings that followed – how they evolved and expanded to become more luxurious, lineal and materially viscous.

Firth-Smith’s thoughtfulness about making paintings and his anxiousness in the studio is never isolated from his circumstances which actually underpin the works’ referential character. His deep affection for the ocean – from openness to harbours – and vessels is critical to him as a person. ‘Densities and atmosphere… if a ship comes into the harbour – and where I’m living now the bridge is amazing because it just hangs there. But a ship comes under that and it almost fills up the space under the bridge… the solidity and the strength of the bridge… incredible manmade ship and it’s all on this soft… water… all those rigs on yachts and ships… have been quite intriguing. It’s all to do with the tension and things supporting things, holding things up, wires…’[3]

While the end of the seventies might have produced some thinking about recent abstraction itself – what had just happened, where to from here? – Firth-Smith’s path had consolidated. In *Red Reflection* we see an idea which grew from the mid-seventies – vessels above and below the waterline – where tankers, container ships and their oxidised and rusted surfaces become the synthesis of knowing observation and the adeptness to make an astonishing painting.

1. Central Street Gallery, Sydney (1966 – 1970) was a converted city building and included Tony McGillick, Dick Watkins, Gunter Christmann and others; for a fuller account, including Clement Greenberg’s reaction to their work, see Green, C., ‘Notes on the Centre: Two Decades of American Painting in Australia, 1967’,*Tate Papers*, no. 32, Autumn 2019
2. *Untitled*, 1972, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Gift of Rosemary Foot, 1972
3. Artist’s interview with James Gleeson, 29 August 1979, Oral History Collection, National Gallery of Australia

DOUG HALL AM



MIKE BROWN 53

(1938 – 1997)
MIND STRUCTURE IN ORANGE, 1979 – 80
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
106.5 x 91.0 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
Mind Structure in Orange Mike Brown 79 – 80

ESTIMATE: $3,000 – 5,000

PROVENANCE

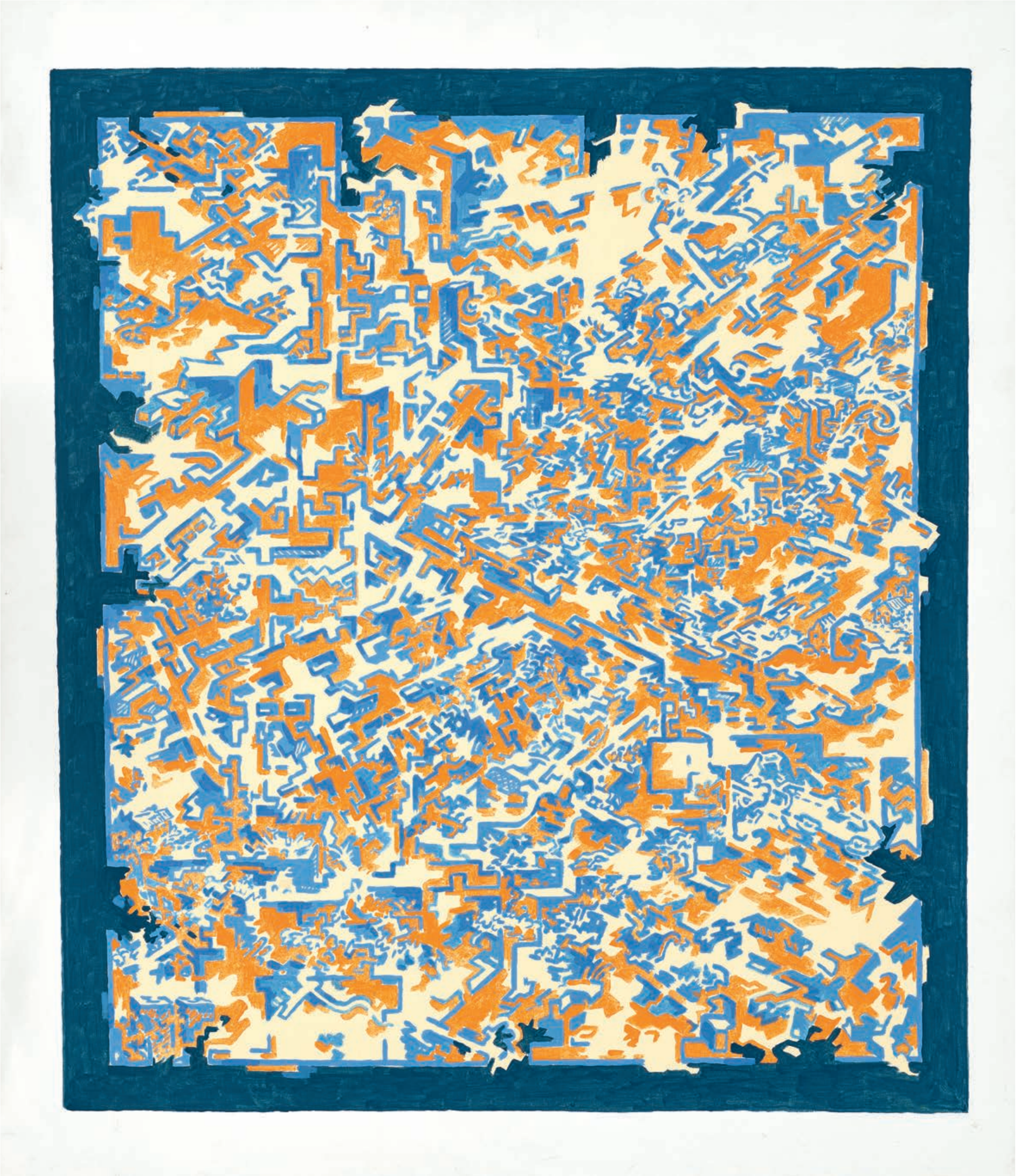
Probably: Pinacotheca, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in August 1980 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Collection of Modern Art in the Seventies, Latrobe Valley Arts Centre, Victoria, 9 May – 2 June 1985
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 5
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 5; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990
Hidden Treasures: Art in Sydney's Corporate Collections, S. H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney, 12 January – 19 February 1994

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 17, p. 30 (illus.)



MARTIN SHARP 54
(1942 – 2013)
VINCENT, 1970
synthetic polymer paint on plastic
163.0 x 121.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: Sharp 70

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, acquired directly from the artist
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in May 1980 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Survey 14: Martin Sharp, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 May – 4 July 1981
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 28 (as 'Vincent (from his Self Portrait)')
re: Creation/Re–creation: the art of copying, 19th & 20th centuries, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, 17 October – 25 November 1989
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 24; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

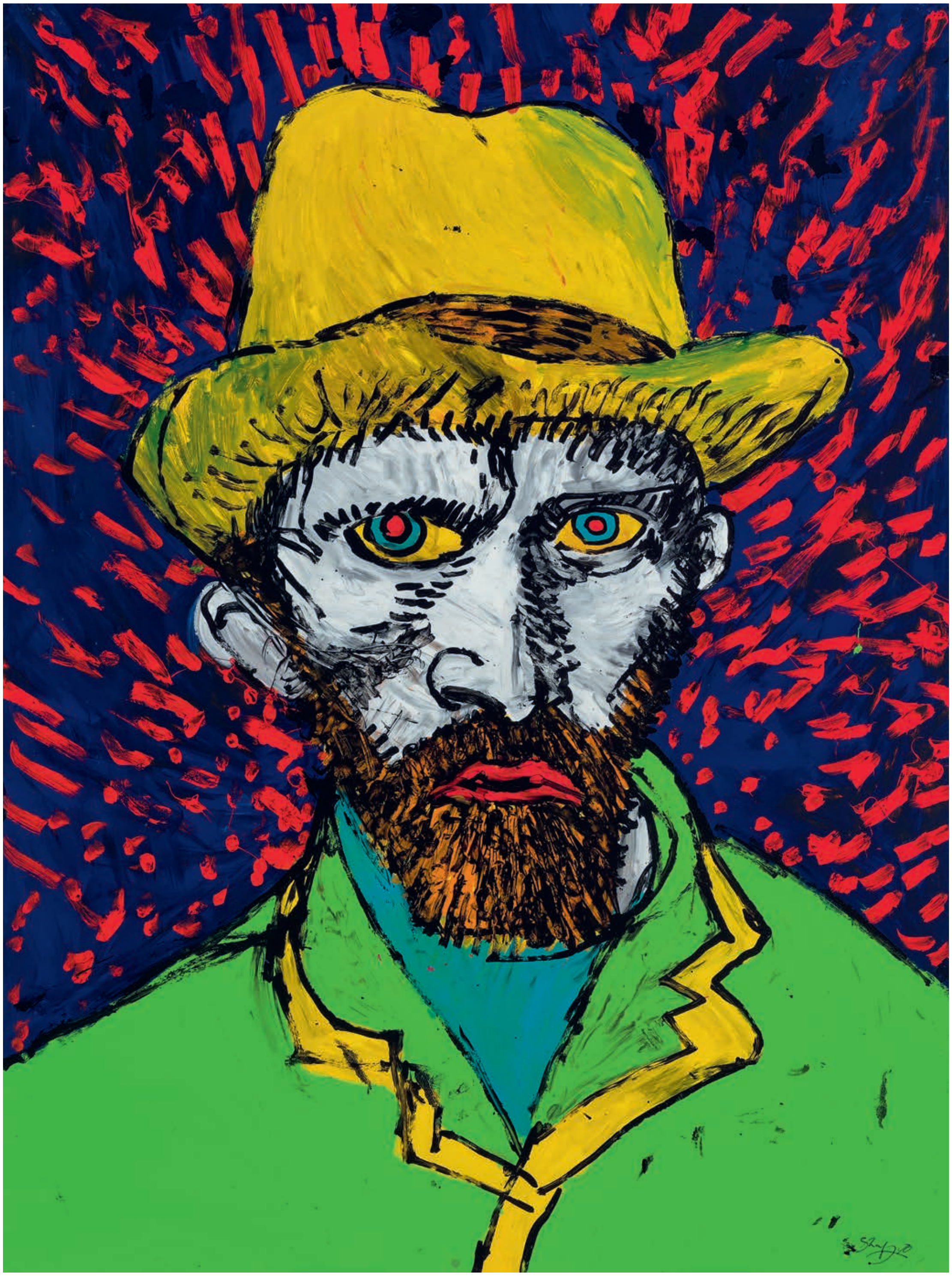
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 82, p. 95 (illus.)
Millar, R., 'A Confident 10 Years', *The Herald*, Melbourne, 21 October 1982, p. 37
'Art on Show',*Central Western Daily*, New South Wales, 18 December 1987, p. 7 (illus.)
Fenner, F., 'The Good Life: Paintings lost in the 70s', *Tamworth Daily Leader*, New South Wales, 1 June 1990

Martin Sharp was perhaps the closest Australia had to a true pop artist. His radar was finely tuned to the sites and themes of the times, and his printmaking of the 1960s capitalised on the notion of an art form that is affordable to all. Album covers and posters for the likes of Jimi Hendrix, Bob Dylan and Cream captured this spirit and brought him fame and notoriety. His use of metallic inks was a genius stroke when it came to reflecting the LSD-soaked guitar licks and optical spasms of the psychedelic era.

When Justin O'Brien, Sharp's art master at high school gave him an art award, the prize was a book on Vincent Van Gogh, and thus began Sharp's lifelong obsession with the artist. *Vincent,* 1970, is painted in the manner of the large format, frontal portraits favoured by despots and dictators as propaganda. Generally, these are hoisted high on buildings or carried through streets to enforce the notion of leaders to be revered or feared. Yet Sharp's portrait here represents the antithesis of those large political portraits. By enlarging Van Gogh's *Self Portrait with a Grey Felt Hat*, 1887 in this manner, it is as if Sharp is saying: follow this man… make art not war, peace and love through creativity… look not to the political class, but to the artists for they are the light and the way. Painted with an inspired urgency using bright contrasting colours and alluding to Van Gogh's dot-dash style, the painting exudes an electric intensity – it demands to be looked at.

In May 1888, Vincent Van Gogh rented a house at Place Lamartine in Arles, which he described as yellow with green shutters. He called it 'The Yellow House' and dreamt of it being a place where he and other artists could live and paint together. In the early 1970s in the spirit of Vincent's Yellow House ideal, Sharp established *The Yellow House Artists Collective* in the former Clune Gallery on Macleay Street, Potts Point. Named after Van Gogh's dream of an artistic retreat, artists such as Brett Whiteley, George Gittoes, Bruce Gould, Philip Noyce amongst others collaborated and presented experimental works in every genre from painting and sculpture to film and happenings. In a way, *The Yellow House Artists Collective* was in itself an artwork; it was a functioning sculpture, an event, a happening and a heaving series of murals all rolled into one. It could be considered as Sharp's magnum opus and a befitting homage to his artistic hero. *Vincent,* 1970, represents a rare work by one of Australia's best-known exponents of pop art, and provides a window into the world of Martin Sharp and his echoing of Vincent van Gogh's unwavering belief that we can change the world for the better through art.

HENRY MULHOLLAND



ASHER BILU

55

born 1936
ZONE II, 1974
polyvinyl butyral resin and pigment on board
183.0 x 152.0 x 4.5 cm
signed and dated lower left: A. BILU 74
signed on backing board verso: ASHER – Bilu

ESTIMATE: $8,000 – 12,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Asher Bilu. Recent Works, South Yarra Gallery, Melbourne, May – June 1974
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
SpaceTime, *Asher Bilu*, Macquarie University Art Gallery, Sydney, 7 March – 27 April 2012

LITERATURE

'Bulletin Briefing', *The Bulletin*, Sydney, vol. 96, no. 4909, 8 June 1974, p. 61
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 10, p. 23 (illus.)
Asher Bilu online catalogue raisonné [http://asherbilu.com/paintings/paintings-1970-79/] (accessed 12/1/22)

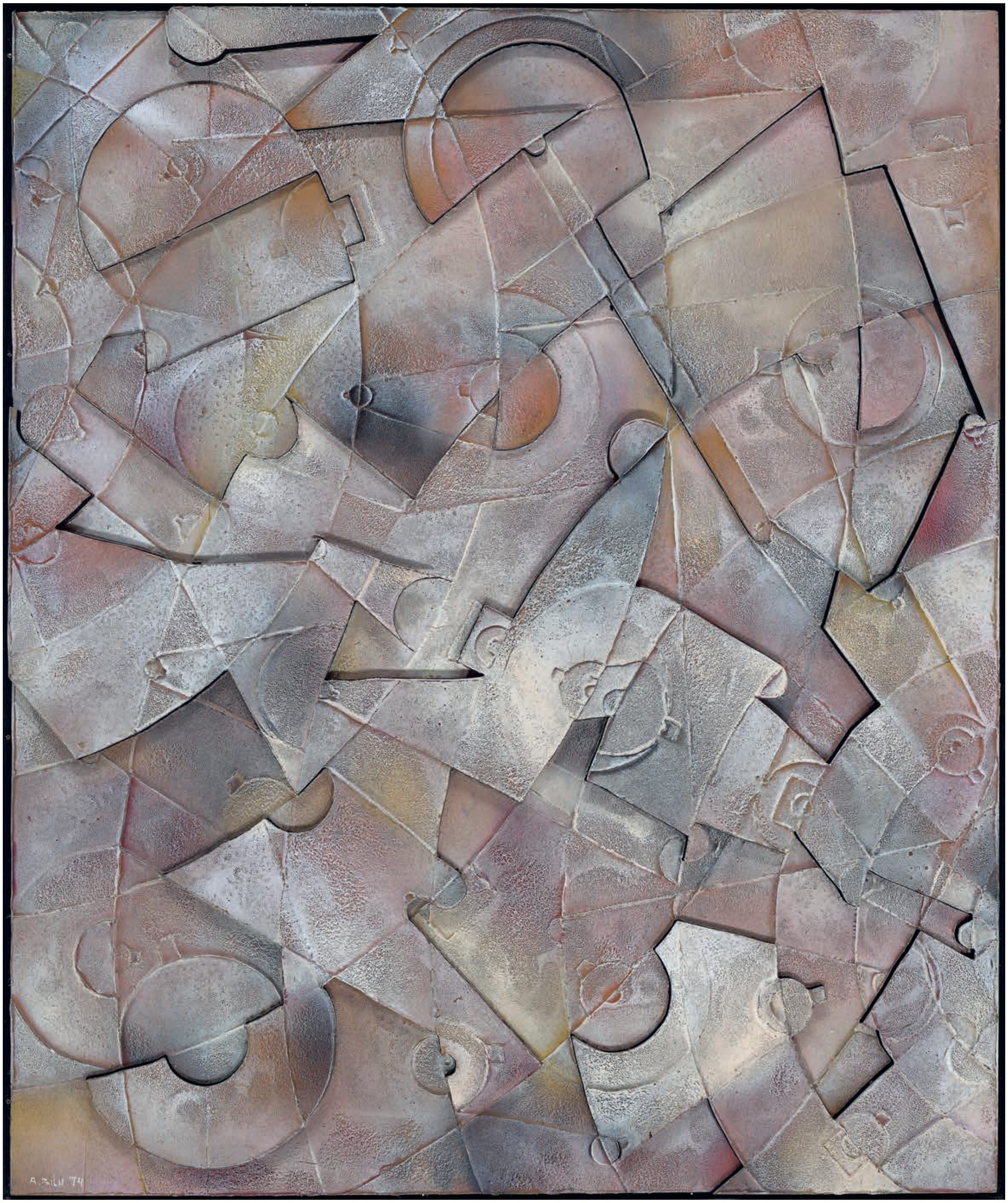
RELATED WORK

Zone I, 1973, polyvinyl butyral resin and pigment on board, 92.0 x 110.0 cm, private collection

The following excerpt is from Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 23

Zone II 1974 demonstrates, with its experiments in surface texture and spatial manipulation plus the use of the circular rhythms to organize the abstract structure of the work, Asher Bilu's continuing concern for a symbolic representation of the cosmos – 'The cosmos has become' he said in the early 1960s 'a reality and awaits the artist who will communicate its full wonder to us.'[1] He has experimented with different surface textures and effects, often adding a variety of materials to the paint or charring the paint surface with a blowtorch to achieve an organic molten planet-like surface evoking connotations of primordial creation and galactic cosmos. After building up the surface textures of his works on a single base Asher Bilu began, during the 1970s, to create low-relief works in which various free-form elements were overlapped, raised and lowered in relation to each other. In *Zone II* the circular patterns and lines echo the cyclic rhythms of the universe where the various orbits of the planets trace overlapping paths and provide a structuring model for this work.'

1. Artist's statement in Reed, J., *The New Painting 1952 – 1962* Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1963, p. 47



JONAS BALSAITIS 56

born 1948
SYNTHETIC PATTERN, 1978
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
132.0 x 157.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title on stretcher bar verso: Jonas Balsaitis Synthetic Pattern 1978

ESTIMATE: $5,000 – 8,000

PROVENANCE

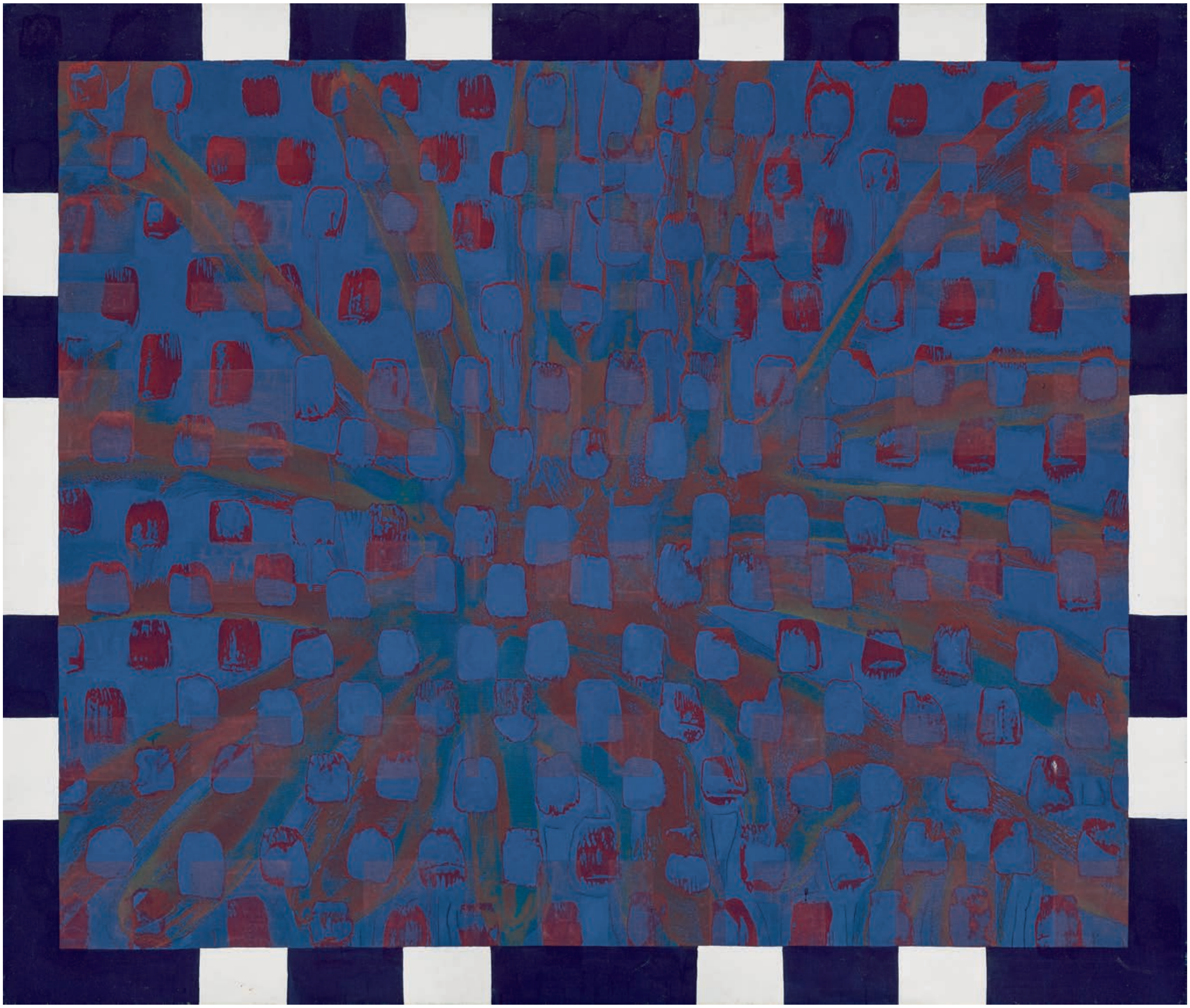
Probably: Pinacotheca, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in April 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 1
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 1; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 5, p. 18 (illus.)



TIM STORRIER

57

born 1949
OUTBACK GARDEN, 1979
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
122.0 x 122.0 cm
signed and dated lower centre: Storrier '79
inscribed on stretcher bar verso: "STILL LIFE"

ESTIMATE: $20,000 – 30,000

PROVENANCE

Australian Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in May 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982 (as 'Camp II')

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 87, p. 100 (illus., as 'Camp II')
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria, 30 April – 29 May 1988 (as 'Camp II')

RELATED WORK

Colonial Garden, 1979, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 152.0 x 152.0 cm, private collection

'One of the compositional features of 1960s American Pop Art from which emerged the New Realism of the 1970s was the use of single icon images centrally places and isolated within the canvas to emphasise the 'essence of the object'. Warhol's paintings of soup cans elevated an everyday banal object to the states of a contemporary archetypal icon. Here Storrier… employs a centrally placed mundane object… yet although appearing to accurately render the appearance of the object rather than trying to distil the essence of the object/image, creates a surrealistic, unreal image. He has painted numerous desert landscapes in which the intense desert light bleaches out the colour and the shadows create almost abstract patterns. These deserts often have an implied narrative with unexplained relics, monuments, and enigmatic environmental curiosities. In *Camp II* [also known as *Outback Garden*, 1979] the can of weeds exists unexplained in an open empty desert and becomes a vehicle for patternmaking. There is an element of intriguing mystery in how these weeds came to exist in this can, for with their elegance they resemble a floral arrangement, however the rusted can suggests that they were mainly the result of water collecting in the discarded utensil.'[1]

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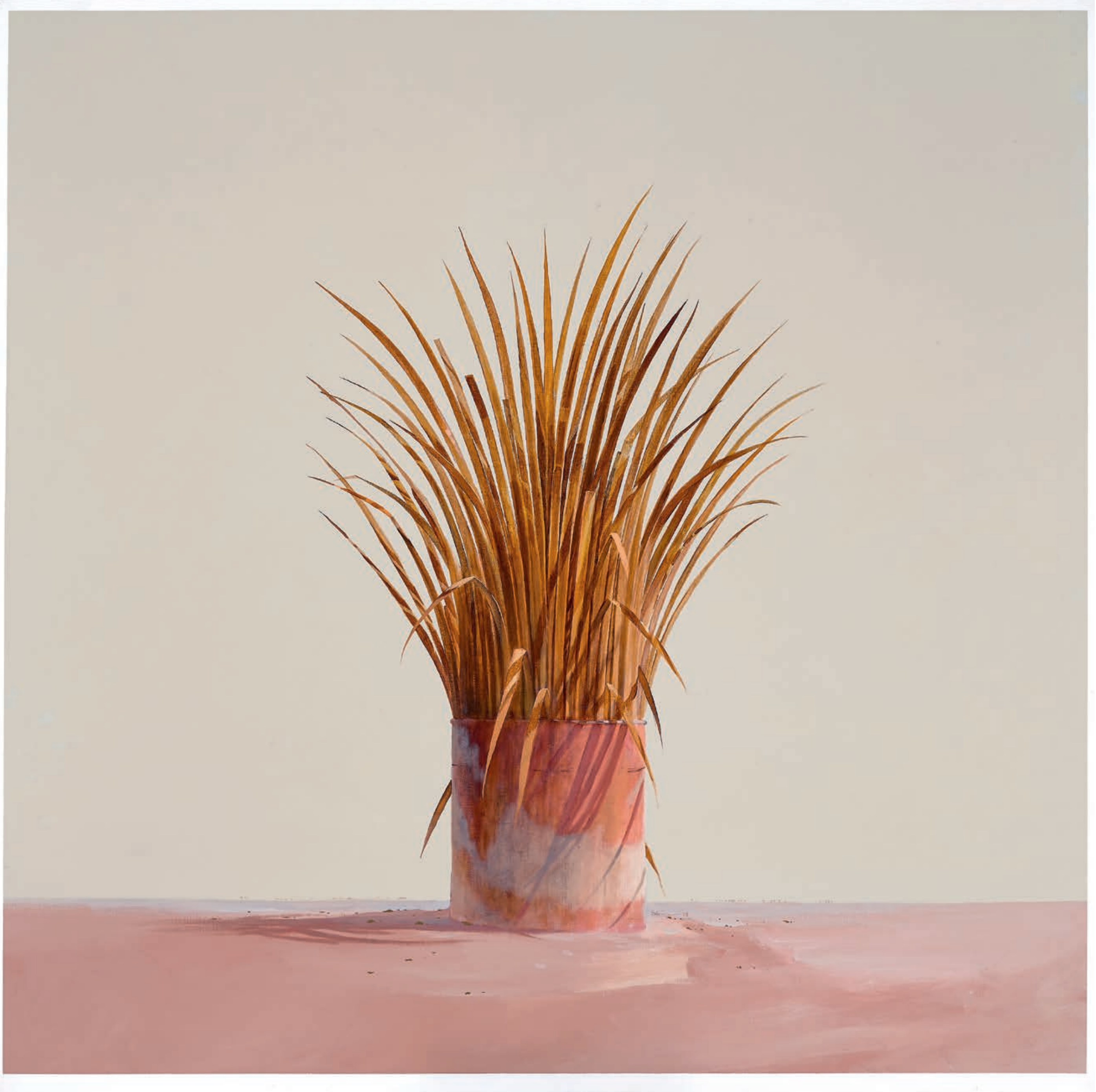
1. Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 100



IVAN DURRANT

58

born 1947
SEVEN PEOPLE IN THE SNOW, 1975
synthetic polymer paint on composition board
113.5 x 174.5 cm
signed and dated lower right: I. DURRANT. ‘75.
inscribed with title on label attached verso:
SEVEN PEOPLE IN THE SNOW

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

PROVENANCE

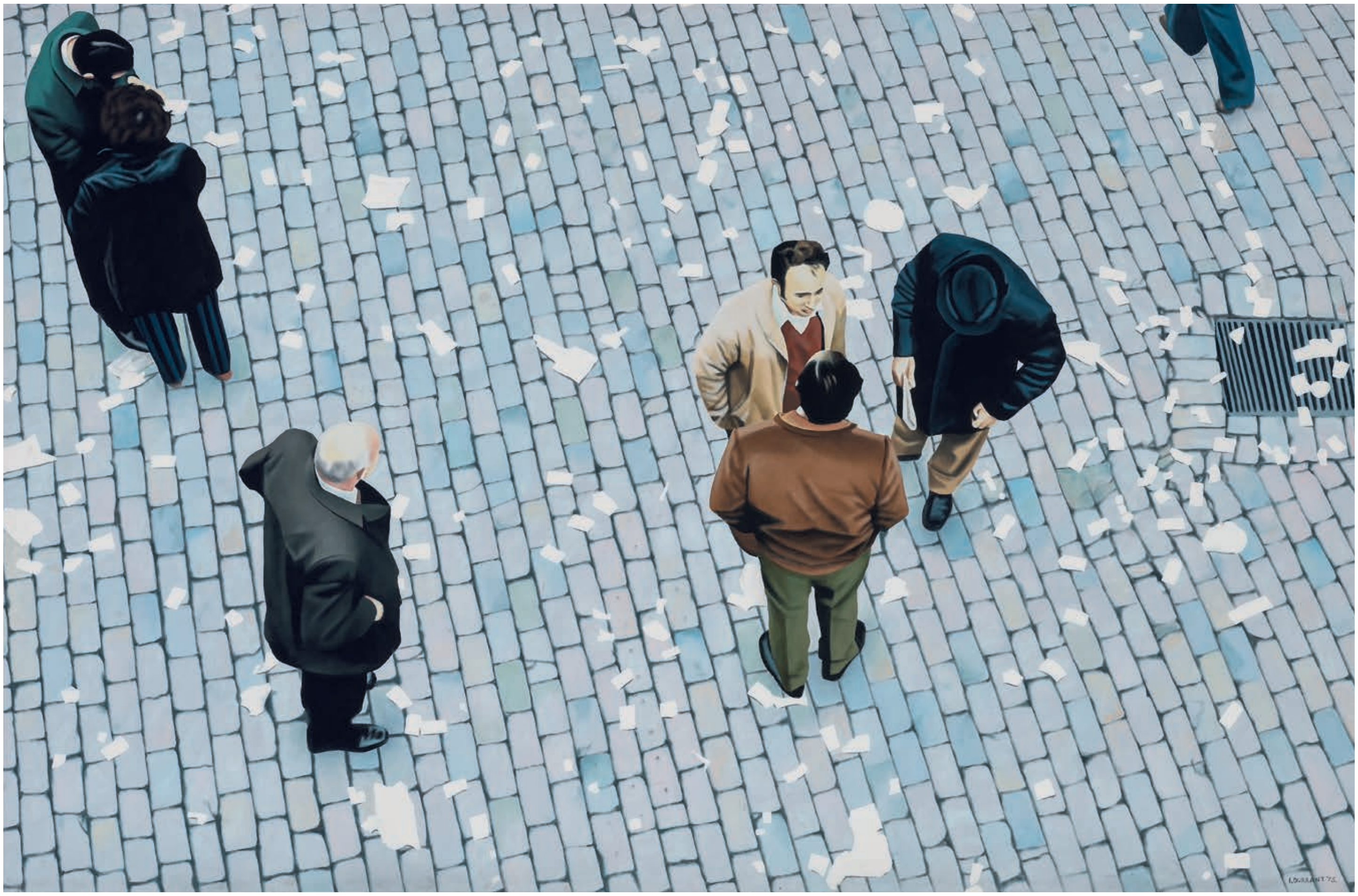
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1975 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Probably: *The Great Fancy Dress Ball, Race Crowds: Ivan Durrant; Recent Paintings*, Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne, September – November 1975
Ivan Durrant, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 12 May – 17 June 1979
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982 (label attached verso)
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 10
‘The Seventies’ Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection ‘Modern Art of the Seventies’, Caulfield Arts Complex Gallery, Caulfield City Hall, Melbourne, 18 January – 11 February 1990, cat. 4
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 10; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990
A Day at the Caulfield Races, Caulfield Arts Complex Gallery, Caulfield City Hall, Melbourne, 4 December 1993 – 23 January 1994
Ivan Durrant: Barrier Draw, The Ian Potter Centre: NGV Australia, Melbourne, 1 May – 25 October 2020

LITERATURE

Catalano, G., ‘Crazy Bugger’, *The Bulletin*, Sydney, vol. 97, no. 4980, 25 October 1975, pp. 64 – 65
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 35, p. 48 (illus.)
Clarke, A., ‘Collection too good to be dispersed’, *The Age*, Melbourne, 15 October 1982, p. 14 (illus.)
Dickins, B., *Ivan Durrant: Barrier Draw*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2020, pp. 56 (illus.), 160



After moving to Flinders on the Mornington Peninsula in 1970, Ivan Durrant obtained a training licence and began to train his racehorse Gadshill, who had been bought with the proceeds of his first sell-out solo exhibition, *The Country Family* at Georges Mora's Tolarno Galleries in St Kilda. The artist's love of the racetrack and everything associated with it, as well as with cattle and farm life, has been a constant of his career since that time.

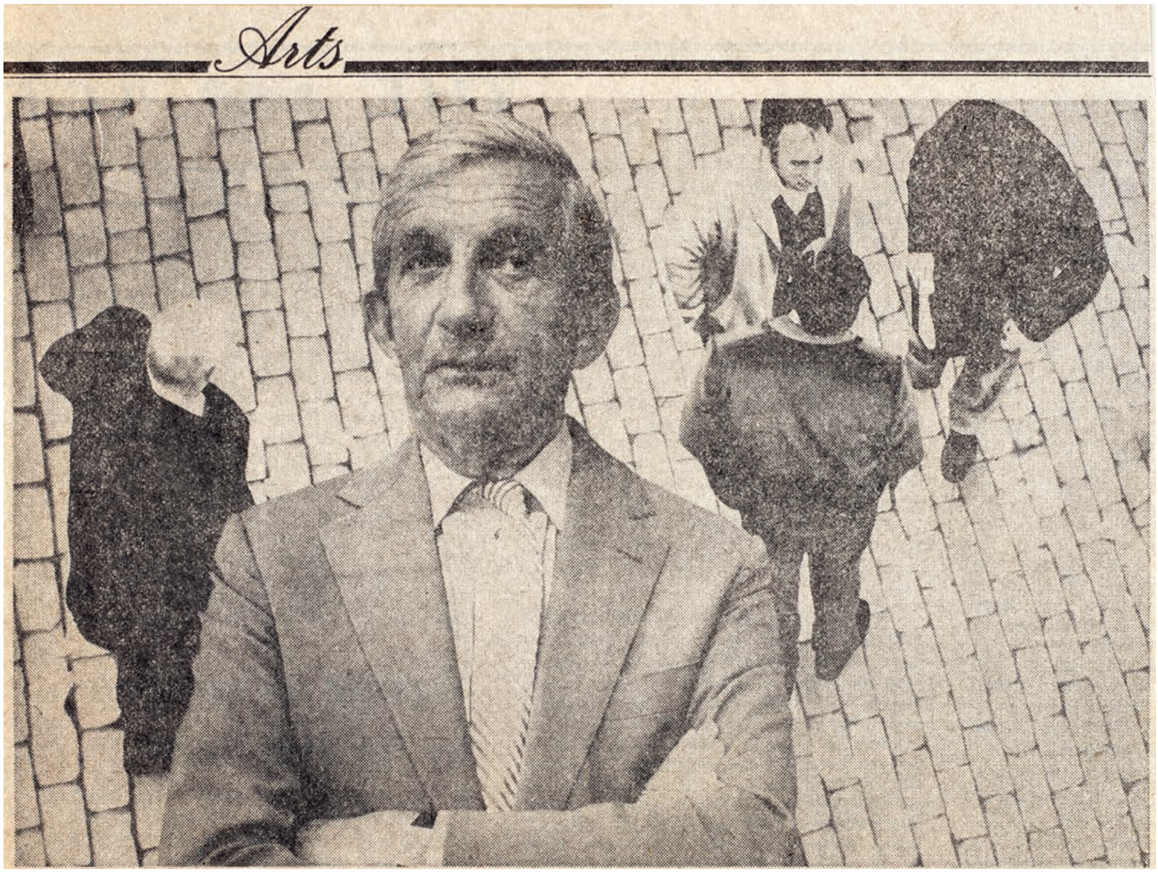
Seven People in the Snow was painted in the year that Durrant achieved notoriety for the staging of his 'Slaughtered Cow Happening' at the National Gallery of Victoria. On 26 May, the artist deposited the freshly killed carcass of 'Beverley the cow' on the museum's forecourt after informing the gallery's staff that he was donating a sculpture. A comment on the realities behind society's consumption of meat – the death of an animal, and widely interpreted as an anti-Vietnam War statement – the subsequent media response was conceived as an essential part of the work. The media responded as if to script, with outraged national TV and newspaper coverage. If not known in every Australian household by name, the artist certainly became known around the country for this action.

By the mid-1970s Durrant had moved away from the dreamlike naïve style of his early paintings to photo-realism, embraced by the artist for the way in which this new technique offered viewers 'the joy of observation' and for its ability to 'freeze the world in its tracks and take a good hard look.'[1] He also came to know and admire the work of American Super-Realist painters Chuck Close and Janet Fish at this time, whose work was shown in Melbourne at Tolarno in 1975[2]; inspiring his family's relocation to New York early in the following year so that they could 'get over there and mix it'.[3] Durrant subsequently developed friendships with Close and Janet Fish, among other artists, while living there.

Durrant began painting scenes from the racetrack in 1975, and he has described *Seven People in the Snow* as 'the key one in the racing series and in fact the key painting for the later meat works that followed'.[4] Working at his favourite racetrack, Caulfield, and with a new Pentax camera, Durrant's position above the men enabled him to capture their interactions and body language unobserved, from a bird's eye perspective. As fellow onlookers, we are left to infer the subject and tone of the punters' conversation, and to try to perceive whether we have winners or losers below us. The cropping of the legs in the top right-hand corner of the work powerfully conveys the snapshot feel of the painting's original source, while the tonal range of black, brown and cream in the men's clothing reinforces the scene's subdued mood. While we are unable to know if any of the subjects have found themselves richer at this stage of the day, the sheer number of discarded tickets – the work's 'snow', would indicate that there have been far more losers than winners.

1. See Ivan Durrant, 'Melbourne Artist Ivan Durrant on Super-Realist Art', https://www.essentialsmagazine.com.au/art/melbourne-artist-ivan-durrant-on-super-realist-art (viewed 2 December 2021)
2. Chuck Close's now-iconic portrait *Bob*, 1970 in the collection of the National Gallery of Australia, Canberra was purchased from this exhibition.
3. Ivan Durrant, op. cit.
4. Durrant, I., 'Artist's Statement', *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 48

KELLY GELLATLY



Georges Mora, with Ivan Durrant's
'Seven People in the Snow', 1982
photographer: Gerard Walsh
originally published in The Age, Melbourne,
15 October 1982, p. 14

PETER TYNDALL 59

born 1951
A PERSON LOOKS AT A WORK OF ART, 1977
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
90.0 x 44.5 cm
signed verso: PETER TYNDALL
inscribed with title and date verso:
A PERSON LOOKS AT A WORK OF ART. 1977.

ESTIMATE: $5,000 – 8,000

PROVENANCE

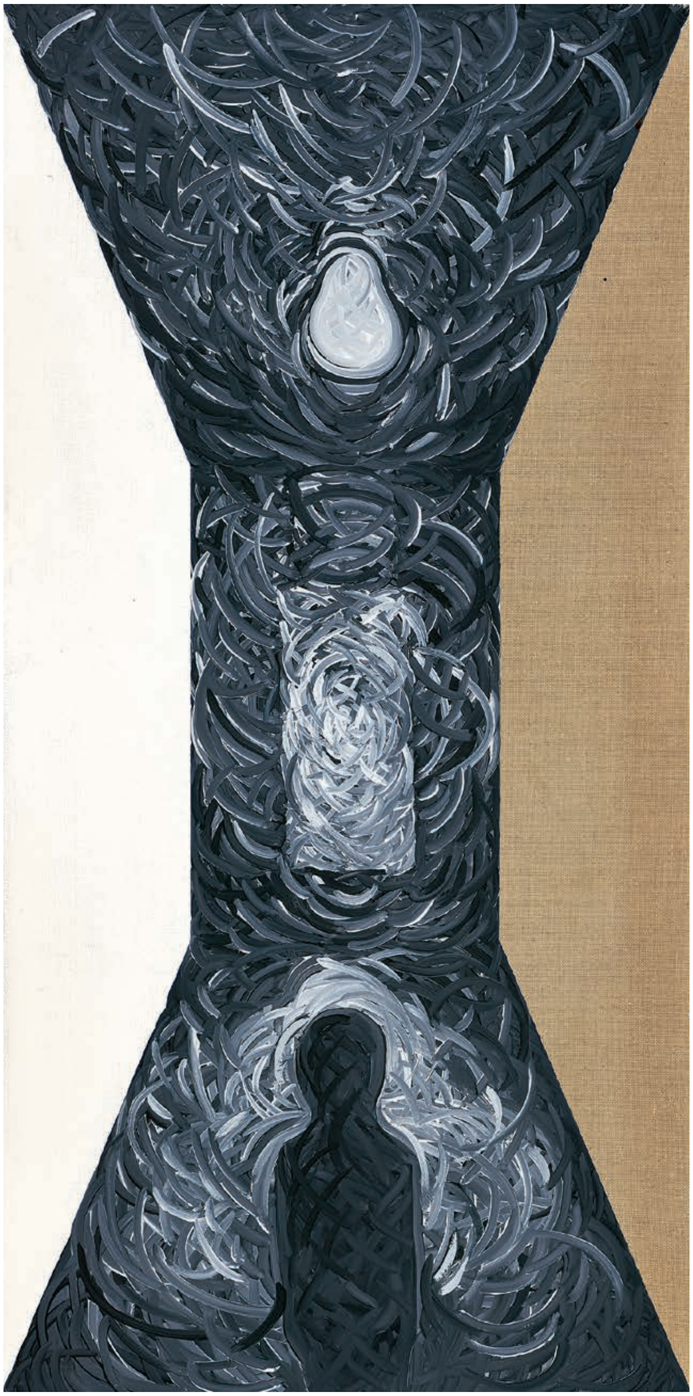
Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Peter Tyndall, Ray Hughes Gallery, Brisbane, 1979
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 36
The Seventies: Contemporary Australian Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, organised by Regional Galleries Association of New South Wales, New South Wales, cat. 27; and touring, Tamworth City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 24 May – 24 June 1990; Dubbo Regional Art Gallery, New South Wales, 11 July – 6 August 1990; Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales, 17 August – 10 September 1990; Moree Plains Regional Gallery, New South Wales, 3 October – 31 October 1990

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 93, p. 106 (illus.)



JAN SENBERGS

60

born 1939
THE GATE BEYOND THE GATE, 1976
oil and silkscreen on canvas
151.5 x 192.5 cm

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1977 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Possibly: *Jan Senbergs, Paintings*, Rudy Komon Gallery, Sydney 18 September – 13 October 1976
The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
Jan Senbergs' Survey, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, 1 August – 18 September 1994

LITERATURE

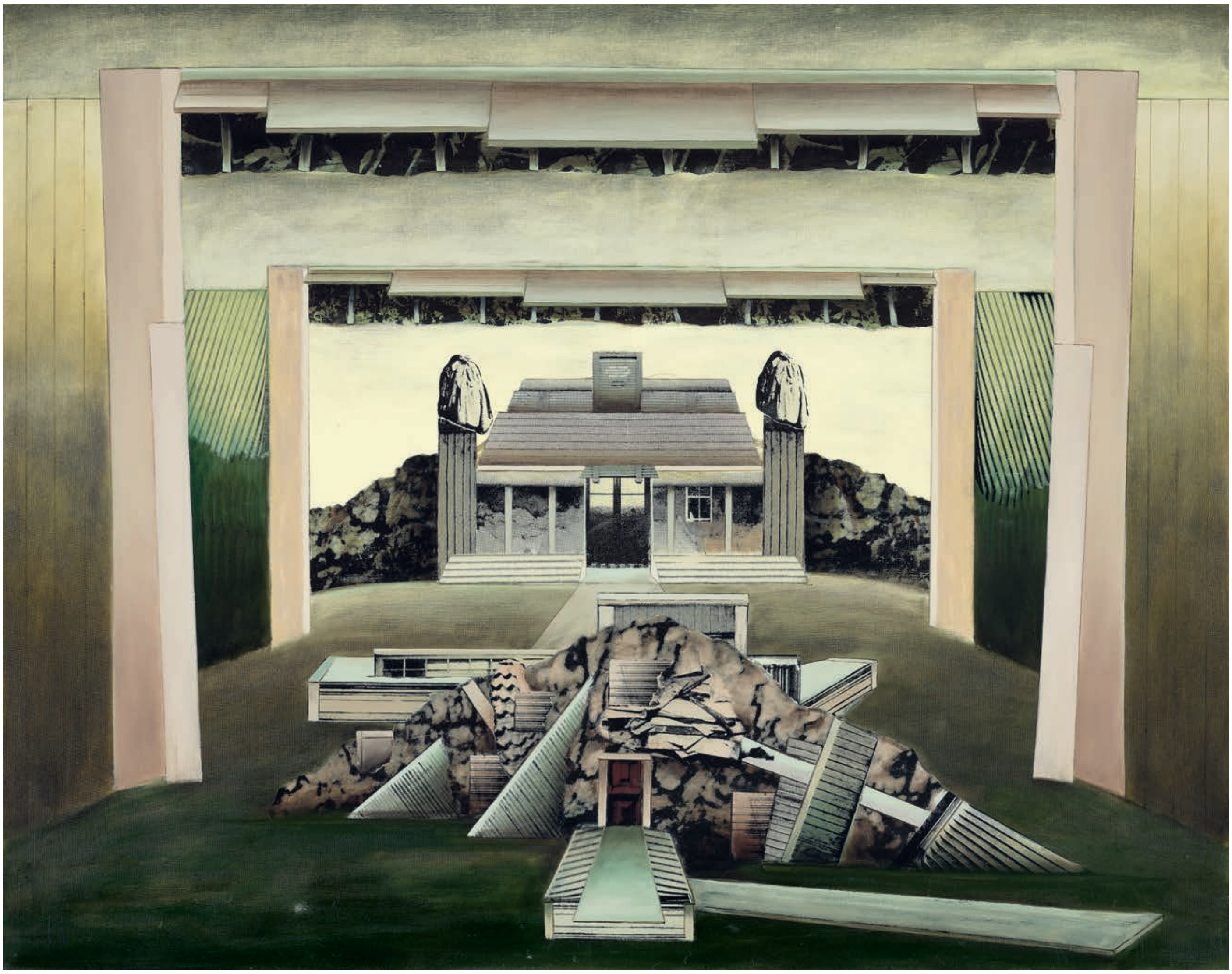
Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 80, pp. 93 (illus.), 125
McCaughey, P., *Voyage and Landfall: The Art of Jan Senbergs*, The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne, 2006, pp. 46, 47 – 48 (illus.), 49
Wallace-Crabbe, C., 'Review: Patrick McCaughey, Voyage and Landfall: The Art of Jan Senbergs' in *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Art*, vol. 7, no. 2, 2006, p. 85
Kolenberg, H., *Jan Senbergs Complete Screenprints 1960 – 88*, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, 2008, p. 62

RELATED WORK

Gateway, 1975, colour screenprint, 50.8 x 84.0 cm, in the collection of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney

'*The Gate Beyond the Gate*, 1976 was painted while Jan Senbergs was living in Canberra on an Australian University Creative Art Fellowship from 1975 to 1976. His works of this period are characterised by a general lightening of colours, with the introduction of earth colours and green to offset the sombre blacks of his earlier works. From the mid 1960s, Senbergs began incorporating photo-stencil silkscreen painted images directly onto his canvases, and to enhance their clarity he used predominantly dark contrasting colours like black or dark brown. The images of his 1970s works, like the abstract shapes of his earlier works, were chosen for their formal visual qualities often from his photography or printmaking, their source being magazines, newspapers or enlarged photographic segments of objects in his studio such as worn clothing or chairs. These elements were then constructed into surrealist landscapes which, because of the fragmented quality of the imagery, are often taken as symbols of destruction with the dark palette having connotations of pessimism. They are invariably interpreted as a vision of apocalyptic doom and the destruction of civilisation, although they are principally intended by the artist to be visual formalist statements. Many of his paintings of this period tend to have a central path leading back into the picture as if representing a metamorphic journey into the past – for he incorporates direct architectural references into his Canberra works, recording through buildings, rather than people, the progression of time.'[1]

1. Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 93



MICHAEL SHANNON

61

(1927 – 1993)
WINTER LANDSCAPE, MELBOURNE, 1979
oil on canvas
121.5 x 91.5 cm
signed and dated lower left: Shannon 79
bears inscription verso:
MICHAEL SHANNON WINTER LANDSCAPE – MELBOURNE

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

PROVENANCE

Probably: Powell Street Gallery, Melbourne
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in October 1979 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 15 October – 28 November 1982
The Seventies Exhibition: Selected Paintings from the National Australia Bank Collection, MacLaurin Hall, The University of Sydney, Sydney, 6 September – 1 October 1989, cat. 30

LITERATURE

Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian Paintings and Tapestries from the Collection of National Australia Bank*, The National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, pl. 81, p. 94 (illus.)

'I have been interested in architecture always, but especially as a symbol for so many human aspirations. Also I have enjoyed other painters' urban (and suburban) landscapes as extensions of that view. The idea in this painting was to present some aspects of the distant office-blocks and towers of Melbourne against the clear, cold breezy air of a winter morning. The city is separated by parks and trees from the personal, informal and unpretentious houses and apartments of the inner suburbs. It is peaceful and placid as Sunday morning.

Although the painting is vertical, it was intended to contain aspects of the strong pervasive horizontals which are so much part of the sprawling cities of today. This is the only world which exists for many of us.'[1]

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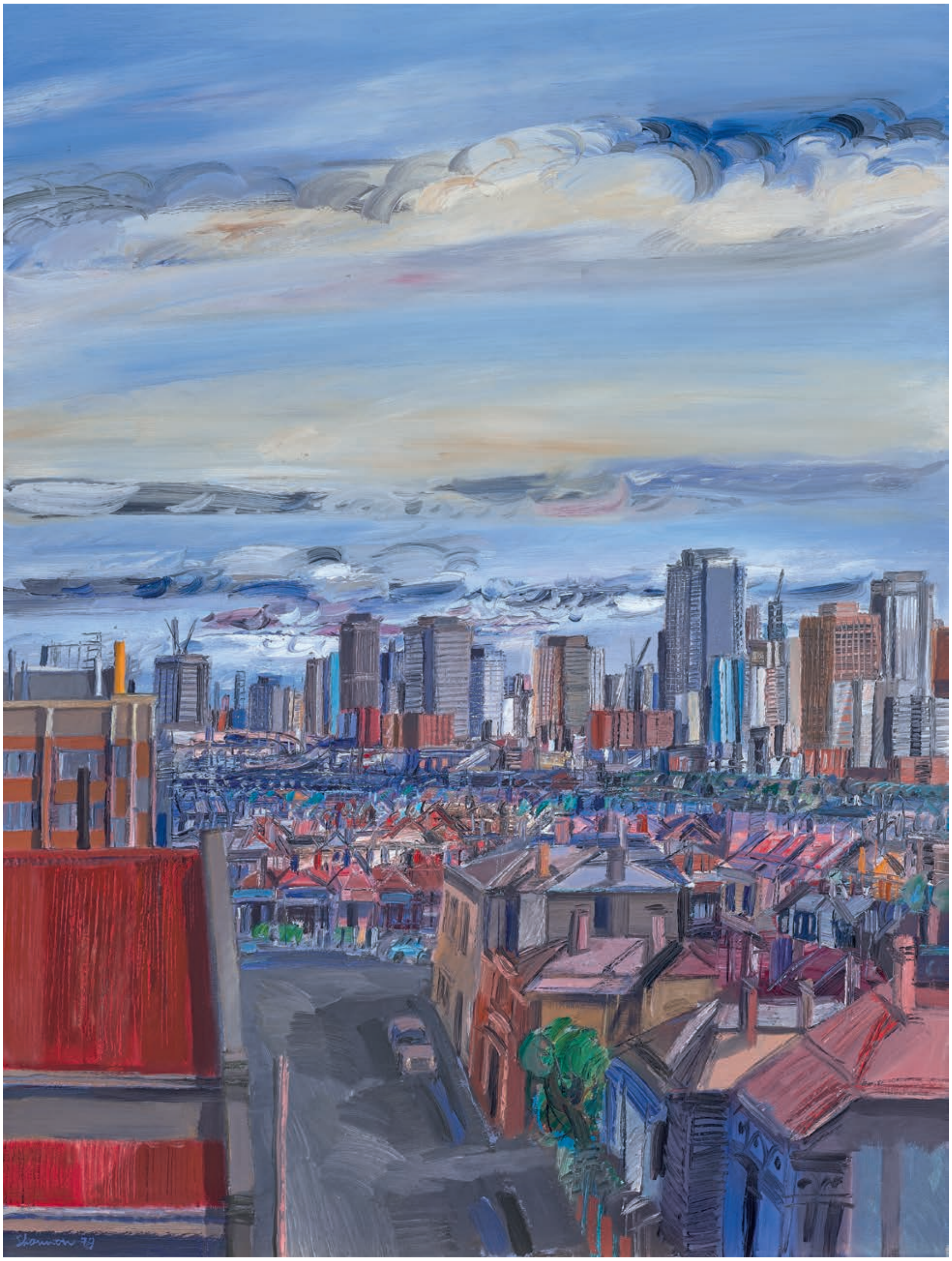
1. Michael Shannon, cited in Lindsay, R., *The Seventies: Australian paintings and tapestries from the collection of National Australia Bank*, National Bank of Australasia, Melbourne, 1982, p. 81



PETER BOOTH

62

born 1940
PAINTING, 1990
oil on canvas
122.0 x 183.0 cm
signed and dated verso: BOOTH 1990

ESTIMATE: $45,000 – 65,000

PROVENANCE

Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in April 1991 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

National Australia Bank Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, October 1991

LITERATURE

The National Australia Bank Art Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1991, p. 19

From his auspicious debut in the ground-breaking exhibition *The Field* held at the National Gallery of Victoria in 1968, Peter Booth has proceeded to achieve international recognition as one of the most important and influential artists of his generation. Yet if it was his large, monochromatic abstract works which initially attracted widespread acclaim, today it is his immensely vivid and painterly figuration for which Booth is best known. Drawing upon epic legends of the past and prophecies for an imagined future, these dramatic, poetic images of the human spirit poignantly explore fundamental human emotions and anxieties, issues of spiritual turmoil, social alienation and the devolution of civilisation. Thus framed within a world both imagined and observed, Booth's vision transcends the immediate or particular to acquire a universality comparable to the musings of his greatest artistic predecessors, including Goya, Blake and Shakespeare.

Featuring a barren landscape illuminated by a low setting sun in an apocalyptic sky, *Painting,* 1990 belongs to the acclaimed group of wet and windy 'frozen landscapes' which Booth executed during the 1990s as a sequel to the quiet snow paintings commenced during the winter of 1989. Inspired by the artist's re-reading of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606) with its chilling themes of ambition and evil bearing resonance for Booth in contemporary Western greed and disregard for the planet, these series represented a transition in Booth's oeuvre which he parallels to the journey in Milton's epic sequence of poems, *Paradise Lost* (1667) to *Paradise Regained* (1671). Accordingly, in many such works, ice or snow throws a curtain of silence over the charred and blackened landscape, heralding the end of man's aggression towards his fellow man and the environment in a manner akin to the omen of destruction foretold by the decimation of Birnam wood in Macbeth.

Sombre and desolate, *Painting* is similarly devoid of life. As Robert Lindsay observes, 'the waves, like coagulating heartbeats of an environment overladen with pollution, slowly move as sludge towards the dead sulphurous shore. It is the twilight of a planet which, as the victim of industrial progress, has seen the extinction of life with only the most adaptable and hardiest of survivors migrating to a new environment'.[1] Not surprisingly perhaps, such haunting images have been interpreted as premonitions against 'The Fall', the possible downward trajectory of the present age towards barbarism and eventually extinction. Perceiving in Booth's art a loss of faith in civilisation, critics have thus suggested these works illustrate the 'Iron Age' described by the ancient Greek philosopher Hesiod in his didactic poem, Theogony (8th century BC) – an age of conflict, misery and crime where men respect neither their vows, nor justice, nor virtue.[2]

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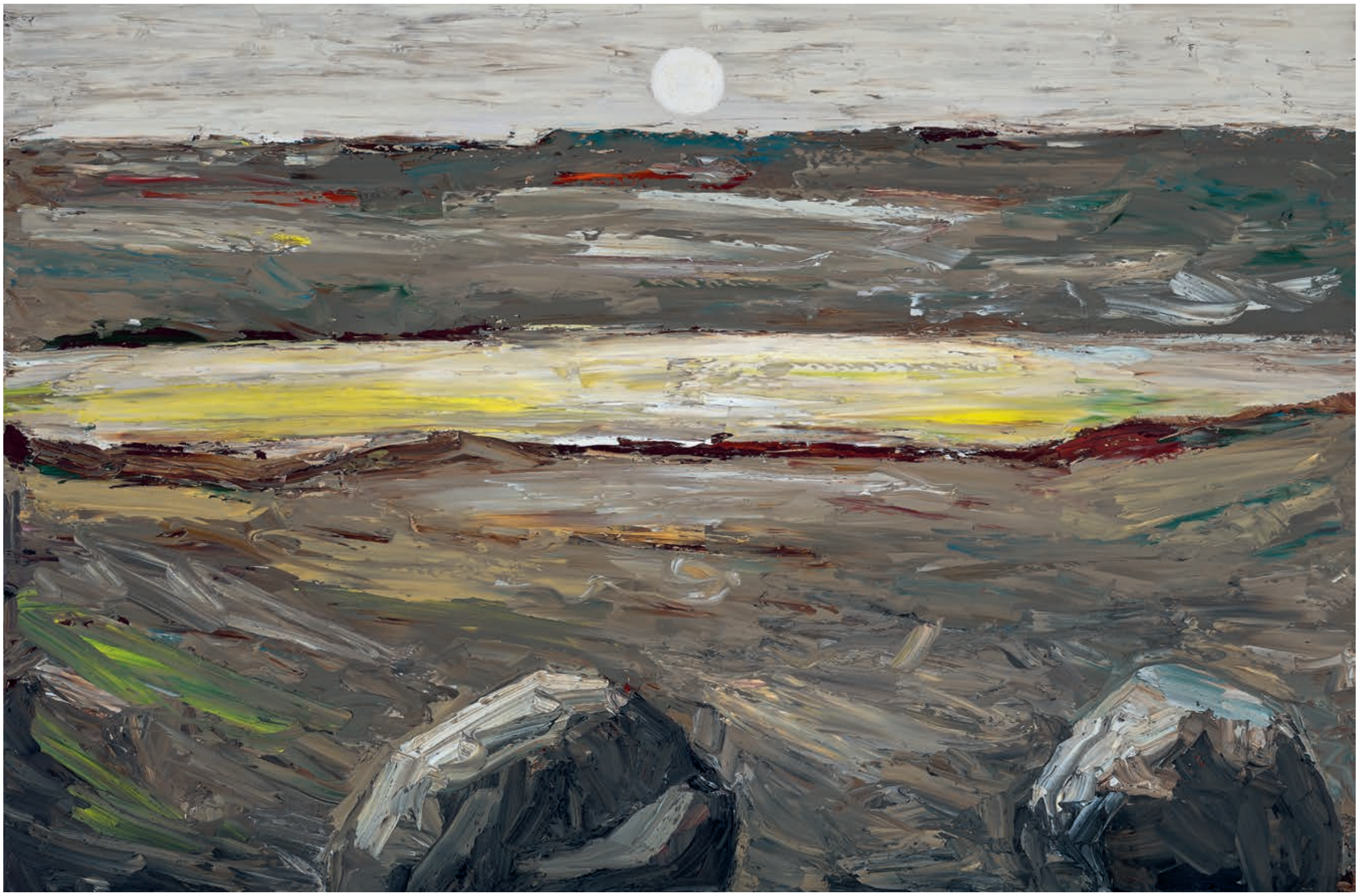
1. Lindsay, R., 'Peter Booth: One Hundred Years of Solitude – The New Ice Age' in *Peter Booth: Recent Paintings*, Deutscher Brunswick Street, Melbourne, 1990, n.p.
2. ibid.

VERONICA ANGELATOS



RICK AMOR

63

born 1948
THE YARRA RIVER AT ABBOTSFORD, 1989
oil on canvas
152.0 x 198.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: RICK AMOR 89
signed and dated verso: Rick Amor / AUG – OCT 89 / 20/10/89 / ...
inscribed with title verso: THE YARRA RIVER / AT ABBOTSFORD

ESTIMATE: $65,000 – 85,000

PROVENANCE

Painted by the artist for the National Australia Bank 'Rivers in Australian Art Acquisitive Prize', 1989
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above (as the Prize Winner) in November 1989 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

National Australia Bank Collection: Rivers in Australian Art,
Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, October 1991

LITERATURE

The National Australia Bank Art Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1991, p. 10 (illus.)

'I've always thought that what we see is not necessarily what's there. There's extra things we don't see, there's layers of reality... The twentieth century seems to be a struggle to relate perception to reality…'[1]

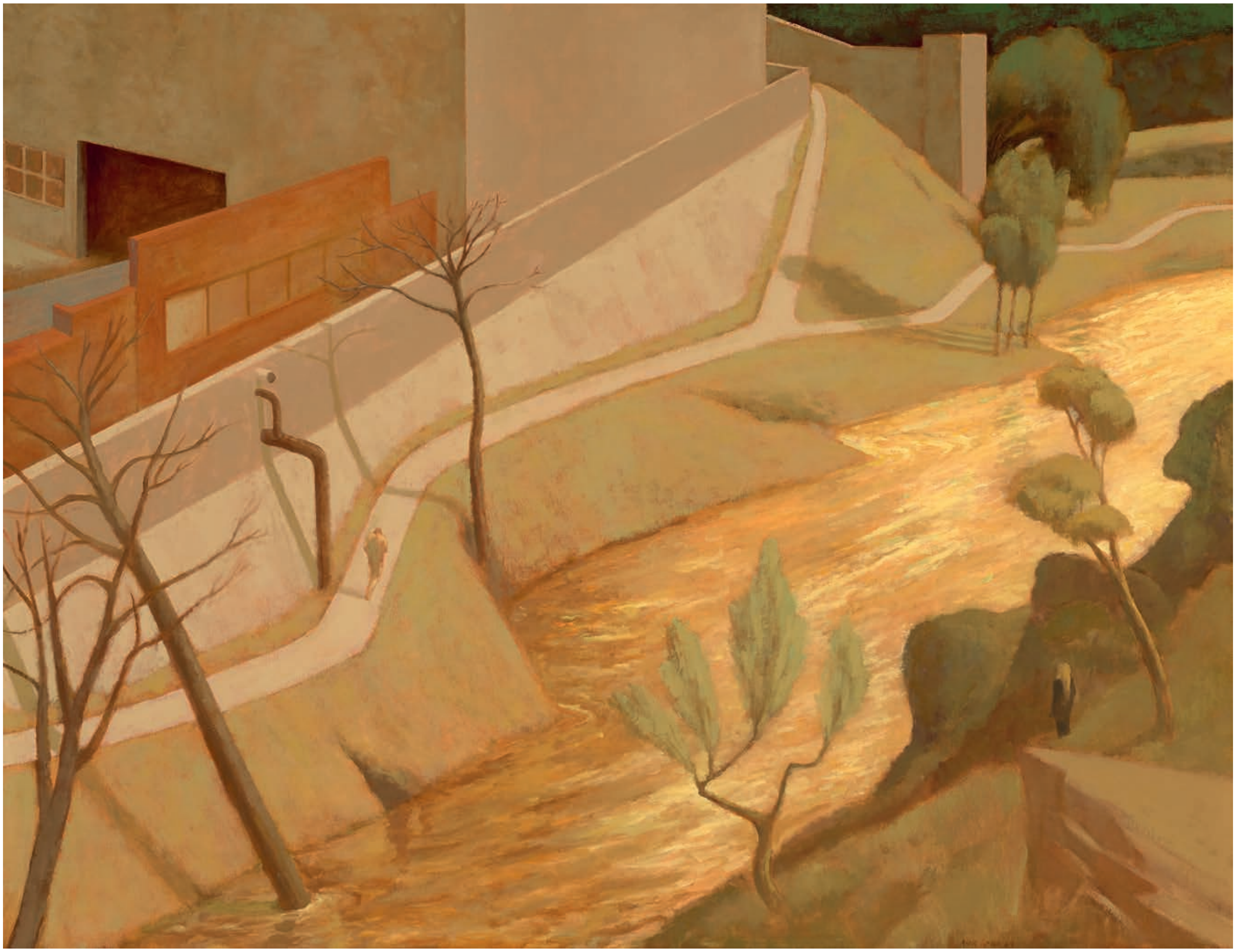
A consummate painter, sculptor and printmaker with a highly successful career spanning four decades, Rick Amor is the master of transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary. Although drawing inspiration from the seemingly mundane, everyday sites of suburbia and the drab underside of the city, his paintings are typically full of drama, deep melancholy and foreboding – resonating with a disquieting sense of both beauty and menace that alludes to the ambiguities inherent in life and humanity's complex existence. Far from being literal translations, Amor's urban landscapes have evolved, rather, over a number of years, and consequently reveal several layers of memory, knowledge and perception – together with the influence of literature concerning cities from T.S. Eliot's poetic verse to the classic dystopian texts of George Orwell and Franz Kafka. As Paul McGillick observes of Amor's work, '… this is a phenomenological process by which the world as we think we see it is actually a construction based only partly on our understanding of it… there is a disconcerting quality to his pictures, as though they were not so much snapshots of reality as frozen frames from the moving pictures of our dreams'.[2]

As exemplified superbly by *The Yarra River at Abbotsford*, 1989, a motif frequently punctuating Amor's urban landscapes is that of the solitary individual, alone and dissociated in his environment. Capturing the view from one of the extensive walking trails along the banks of the Yarra River in Abbotsford, an inner suburb of Melbourne, the scene here bears an uncanny sense of *déjà vu*, of something already experienced. And yet, such familiarity provides the viewer with little comfort or reassurance. To the contrary, the prevailing mood is one of impending doom – the tortured trees, incongruous now in this threatening urbanised environment, cast ominous shadows in the swirling murky waters below, while the two figures, dwarfed in scale and isolated from one another on either side of the river, intensifies the underlying surrealist drama and suspense of the work. Significantly, when discussing the closely related etching entitled *Abbotsford*, 1990 in the collection of the State Library of Victoria, Amor notes that such compositions were inspired by his revisiting of Otto Benesch's book, *Rembrandt as a Draughtsman* (1960) which, gifted to him as a student in 1961, had prompted him to deliberately seek out landscapes reminiscent of those depicted by the Dutch Master.[3]

Arising from the interplay between of observation and invention, the impulse of memory and dreams, thus Amor's works such as the present comment imaginatively upon the physical and transient world of which he is a part. Indeed, such is the evocative power and enduring appeal of his vision that – despite being the outward expression of his own inner life – he nevertheless engages the collective unconscious of universal experiences, thoughts and feelings to poignantly reflect upon the complexities of the human condition more broadly. As the artist himself muses, '…the pictures are real to me and I would love to find these places and walk into them. I hope that my world is sometimes as convincing to the viewer as it is to me'.[4]

1. Amor, R., in Catalano, G., *Building a Picture: Interviews with Australian Artists*, McGraw Hill, Melbourne, 1997, p. 141
2. McGillick, P., 'The City as Dream - The New York Paintings of Rick Amor', *Monument*, no. 22, 1998, pp. 84 – 88
3. See: https://catalogue.rickamor.com.au/works/intaglio/abbotsford/
4. Amor, R., *On Brack, Bren and Picasso*, exhibition catalogue, TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria, 2006, n.p.

VERONICA ANGELATOS



ROSSLYND PIGGOTT

64

born 1958
TWO ROOMS OVER LANDSCAPE, 1991 – 92
oil on linen
121.0 x 182.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso: "Two rooms over landscape" 1991/92 / Rosslynd Piggott / ROSSLYND PIGGOTT

ESTIMATE: $8,000 – 12,000

PROVENANCE

Powell Street Gallery, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition in November 1993 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

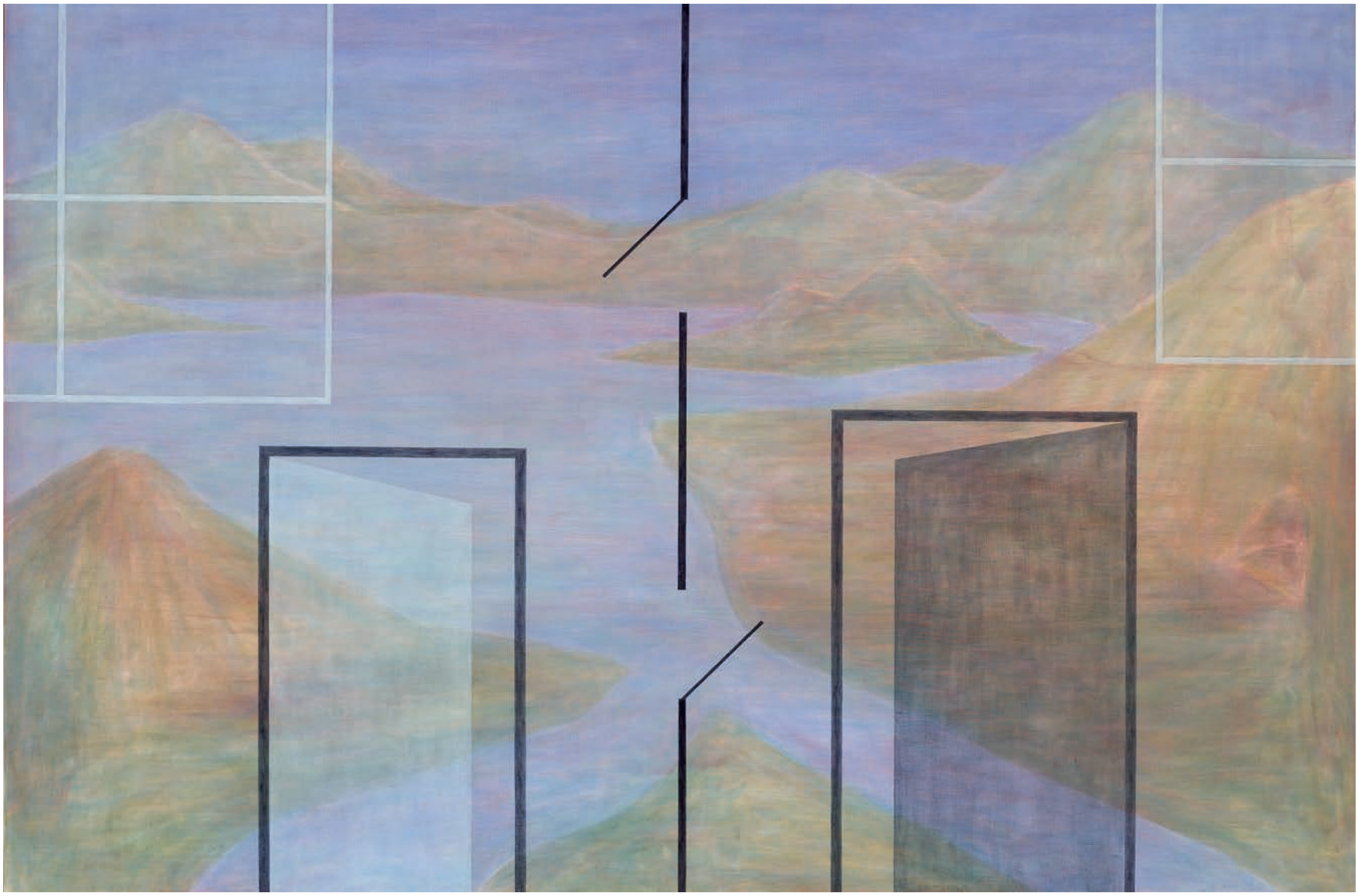
Moët & Chandon Australian Art Foundation Touring Exhibition 1993, touring to Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Hobart; Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Australian National Gallery, Canberra; Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth; Westpac Gallery, Melbourne, 1993

LITERATURE

Annear, J. (ed.), *Moët & Chandon Touring Exhibition 1993*, Moët & Chandon Australian Art Foundation, Sydney, 1992

'For more than three decades, Rosslynd Piggott has been making paintings, objects and installations that give form to hard-to-name sensations. Her works have courted the elusive and the ethereal. They have captured states of flux. They have circled ideas of impermanence, the fleeting and the fugitive. Piggot's career-long obsession with the intangible is evident in works from all phases of her career, carried by certain motifs and materials that appear time and again: air, glass, mirrors, water, clouds and other atmospheric conditions, flowers and all manner of phenomena from the natural world. That is not to say that her work is merely concerned with the exterior world; on the contrary, it is equally concerned with inner states and deep emotional registers. If there is a quality that unites her works it might be described as a kind of wonder – a sense of being of the world yet somehow belonging to a different realm of experience. Or, as the artist herself once suggested, she is 'a striving for a vision, in response to the world, but somehow outside it'.'[1]

1. Devery, J., *Rosslynd Piggott: I Sense You, But I Cannot See You*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 2019, p. 3



ROBERT ROONEY

65

(1937 – 2017)
GONE BIO–BIO TOO, 1993
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
177.5 x 122.0 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
ROBERT ROONEY / << GONE BIO–BIO TOO >> / 1993.

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

PROVENANCE

Pinacotheca Gallery, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in October 1999 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Robert Rooney, Pinacotheca Gallery, Melbourne, 29 September – 16 October 1993, cat. 7
Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art, National Gallery Victoria, Melbourne, 15 March – 1 May 1996 (label attached to stretcher bar verso)

LITERATURE

McPhee, J., *Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1996, p. 27 (illus.)

Robert Rooney is often lumbered with the blanket description that he was one of Australia's finest conceptual artists. While somewhat accurate it is nonetheless an incomplete catch-all to describe work which is diverse but solidly underpinned conceptually. Consider Sol LeWitt's proposition: 'In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair'.[1] It is not possible to look at anything Rooney has undertaken and fail to be impressed by the 'hand' of the artist at every stage.

The Field exhibition of 1968 consisted largely of colourfield formalism while Rooney's contribution, a painting of richly multi-coloured uniform shapes and repeated within a gridded system, was deservedly highlighted for its originality and avant-garde credentials: but despite the context, his works were Pop art.[2] His consistency was always unwavering, 'I have always preferred to work from secondary sources, particularly mass media ones, rather than paint or draw from the actual subject'.[3] The *Kind-hearted kitchen-garden* series from 1967 – 68 remain highly regarded. His discreet and underplayed wry humour was always present. Some shapes have their origins in packets of Kellogg's cornflakes – the back of the packet and the cardboard components were able to be removed and assembled for a child's amusement.[4] Rooney straddles two bridges, that of a Pop artist and one who is central to Post-Pop in Australia. A friend to many of the next generation and a co-exhibitor with them, he was the oldest participant in the landmark exhibition *Popism*.[5] In 1970, he abandoned painting and didn't begin again until 1982. The intervening years were intensely productive; photography took over. His distinctive approach with an interest in conceptualism, serialisation, repetition – usually deadpan in character – invoked imagery from home to suburbia. It began a correspondence and relationship with an international network of like-minded artists from Los Angeles to New York and London.

When *Gone Bio–Bio Too* was exhibited at the *Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art* in 1993, Rooney offered the briefest of statements, recalling his early interest in abstraction, cubism and surrealists such as Jean Arp and Joan Miró, '… also take on associations with my hard-edge serial/cereal abstractions of the late 1960s. Other associations will have to be worked out by the viewer.'[6] The reference to biomorphic abstraction is unmistakable, especially Miró where organic bulbous shapes are divided by two contrasting colours and black lineal definitions play across the surface.[7] Rooney often used imagery he had gathered from childhood onwards, with the flatness of children's book illustrations and comics coming to mind. An all-over controlled randomness is evocative of sixties design – sweeps, arcs, and geometric shapes that float are held in space, intersected and lock together. He trained as a commercial designer – a modernist style of his generation that remained with him. What makes *Gone Bio–Bio Too* so remarkable is Rooney's multifaceted play with elusive sources, ideas and interests to make a work which delights with the completely unexpected.

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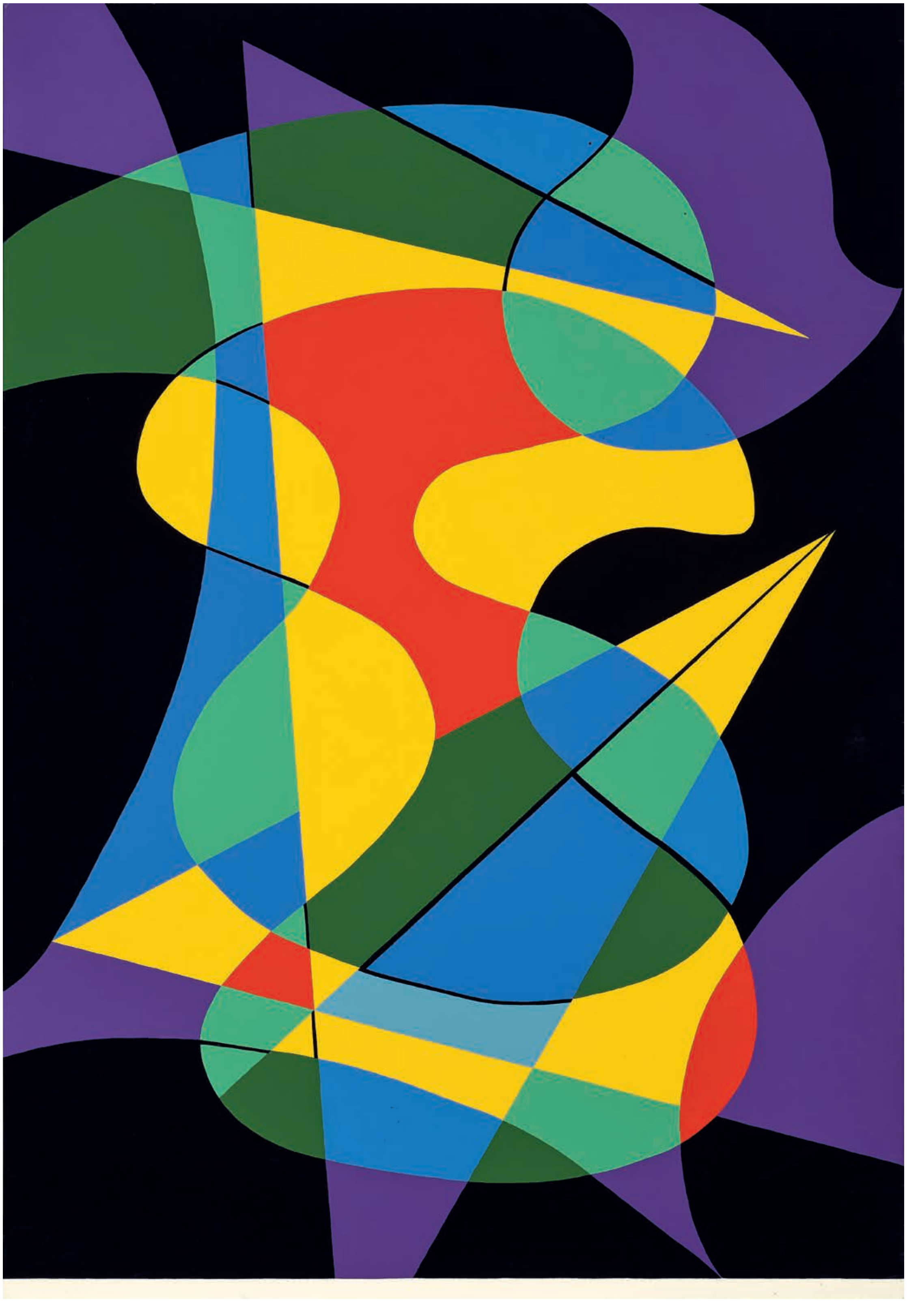
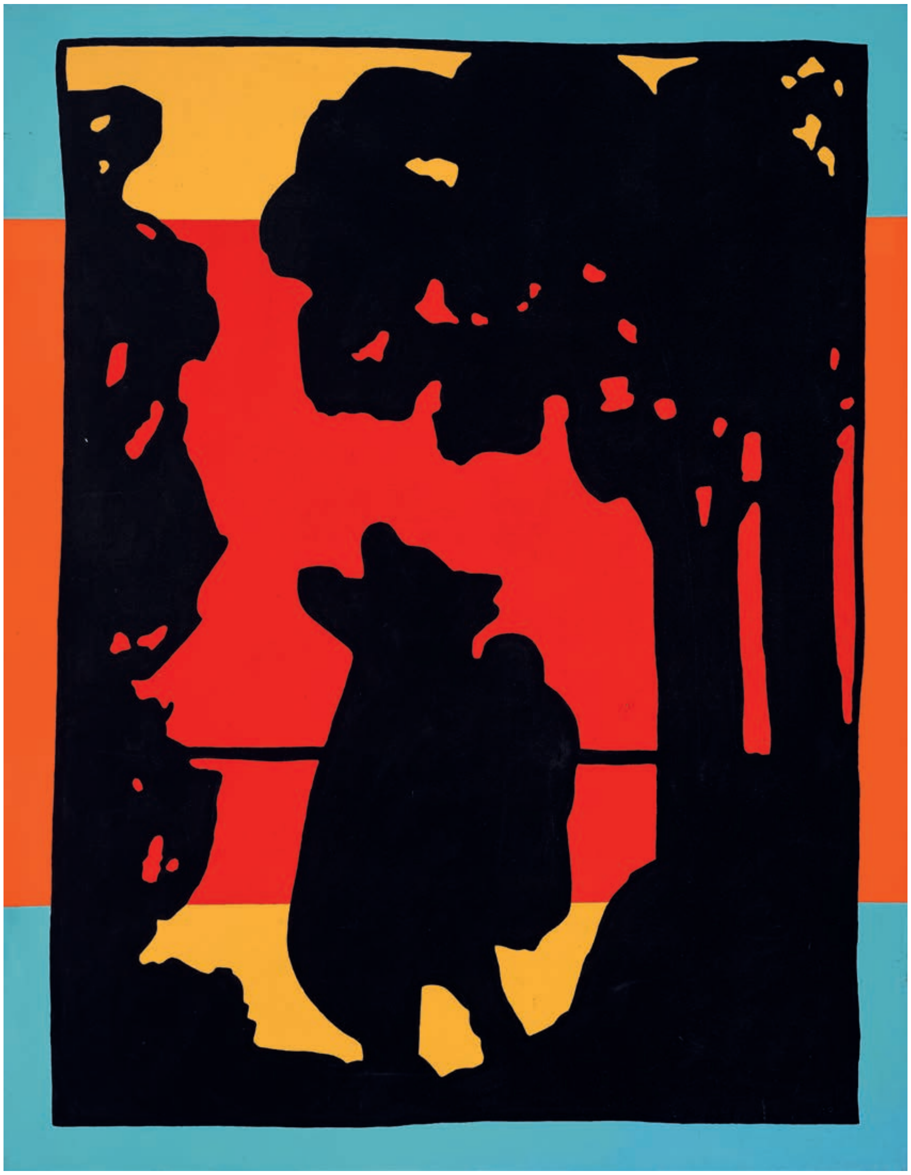
1. LeWitt, S., *Paragraphs on Conceptual Art*, Artforum Vol. 5, no. 10, Summer 1967, pp. 79 – 83
2. Brophy, P., *Robert Rooney as Pop* in *From the homefront: Robert Rooney, works 1953 – 1988*, Monash University Gallery, Melbourne, 1990
3. Quote by the artist, 1986, accompanying the catalogue entry for *Child's journey 1944 – 1954*, 1983, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, collection of Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney, gift of Loti Smorgon AO and Victor Smorgon AC
4. *Kind-hearted kitchen-garden IV*, 1968, synthetic polymer paint on canvas, 168.0 x 168.0 cm, collection of The University of Melbourne Art Collection, Melbourne
5. *Popism*, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1982, curated by Paul Taylor (1957 – 1992), former editor of *Art & Text*. Artists featured in the show included Howard Arkley, David Chesworth, Ian Cox, Juan Davila, Richard Dunn, Paul Fletcher, Maria Kozic, Robert Rooney, Jane Stevenson, The Society for Other Photography, Imants Tillers, Peter Tyndall, Jenny Watson, and Tsk Tsk Tsk.
6. Rooney cited in *Joan and Peter Clemenger Triennial Exhibition of Contemporary Australian Art,* National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, 1993, n.p.
7. Joan Miró (1893 – 1983), *Hirondelle Amour* 1933 – 34, oil on canvas, Museum of Modern Art, New York, gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller, 1976

DOUG HALL AM





ROBERT ROONEY

66

(1937 – 2017)
IN STORYLAND 1, RAGGY BEAR AND PRINCELING, 1993
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
137.0 x 107.0 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
ROBERT ROONEY / << IN STORYLAND I.
/ RAGGY BEAR AND PRINCELING >> / 1993

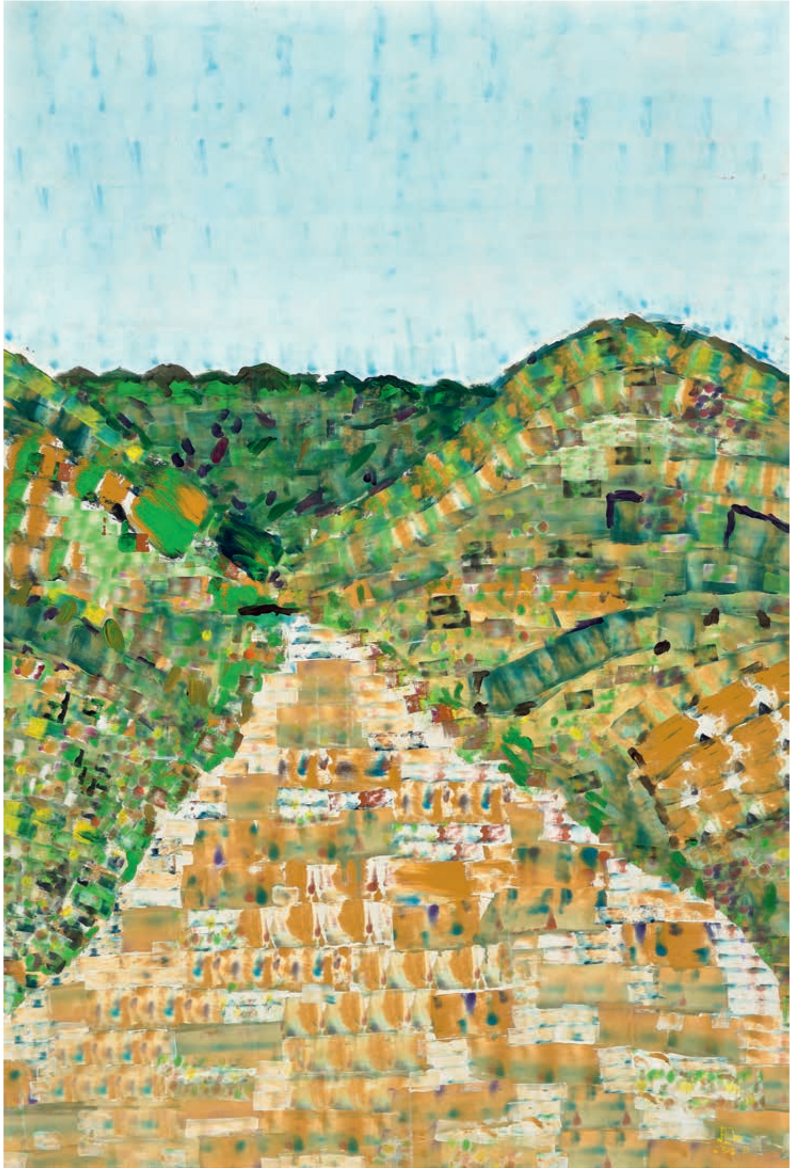
ESTIMATE: $6,000 – 9,000

PROVENANCE

Pinacotheca Gallery, Melbourne
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in October 1997 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Robert Rooney, Pinacotheca Gallery, Melbourne, 29 September – 16 October 1993, cat. 12



RICHARD LARTER
(1929 – 2014)
RIVER, 1991
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
179.5 x 120.0 cm
signed with initials and dated lower right: R. L / 23.2.91
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
RICHARD LARTER / “RIVER” / 23rd February 1991.
/ YASS / … / Richard Larter

ESTIMATE: $6,000 – 9,000

67

PROVENANCE

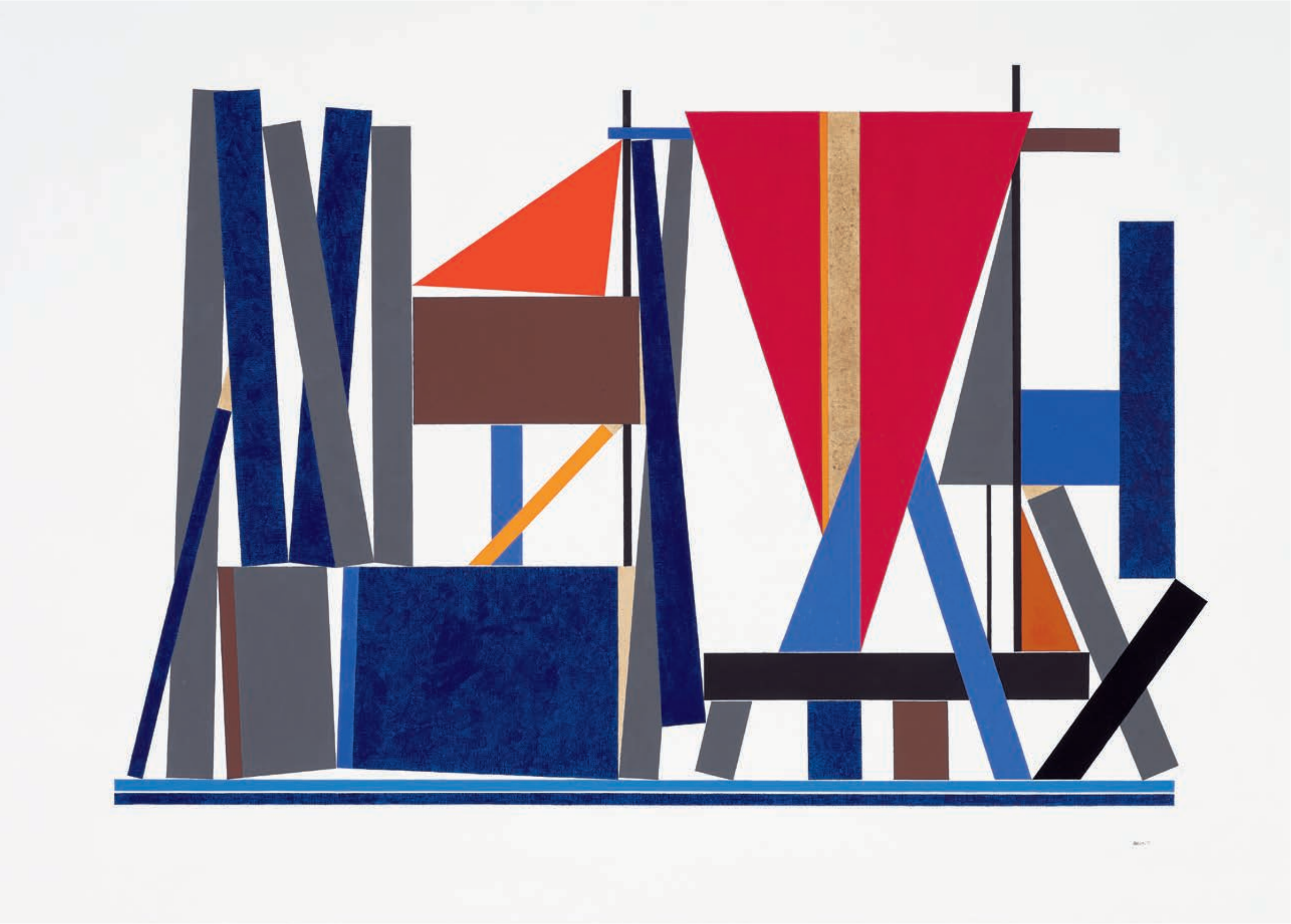
Tolarno Galleries, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in October 1991 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

National Australia Bank Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, October 1991

LITERATURE

National Australia Bank Collection: Rivers in Australian Art, Heide Park and Art Gallery, Melbourne, 1991, p. 19



68

GEORGE JOHNSON
(1926 – 2021)
RED TRIANGLE CONSTRUCTION, NO. 7, 1988
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
152.0 x 213.0 cm
signed and dated lower right: Johnson. 88.
signed, dated and inscribed with title on stretcher bar verso:
GEORGE / JOHNSON / Red Triangle / Construction
/ No 7 / 1988

ESTIMATE: $8,000 – 12,000

PROVENANCE

Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in December 1997 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

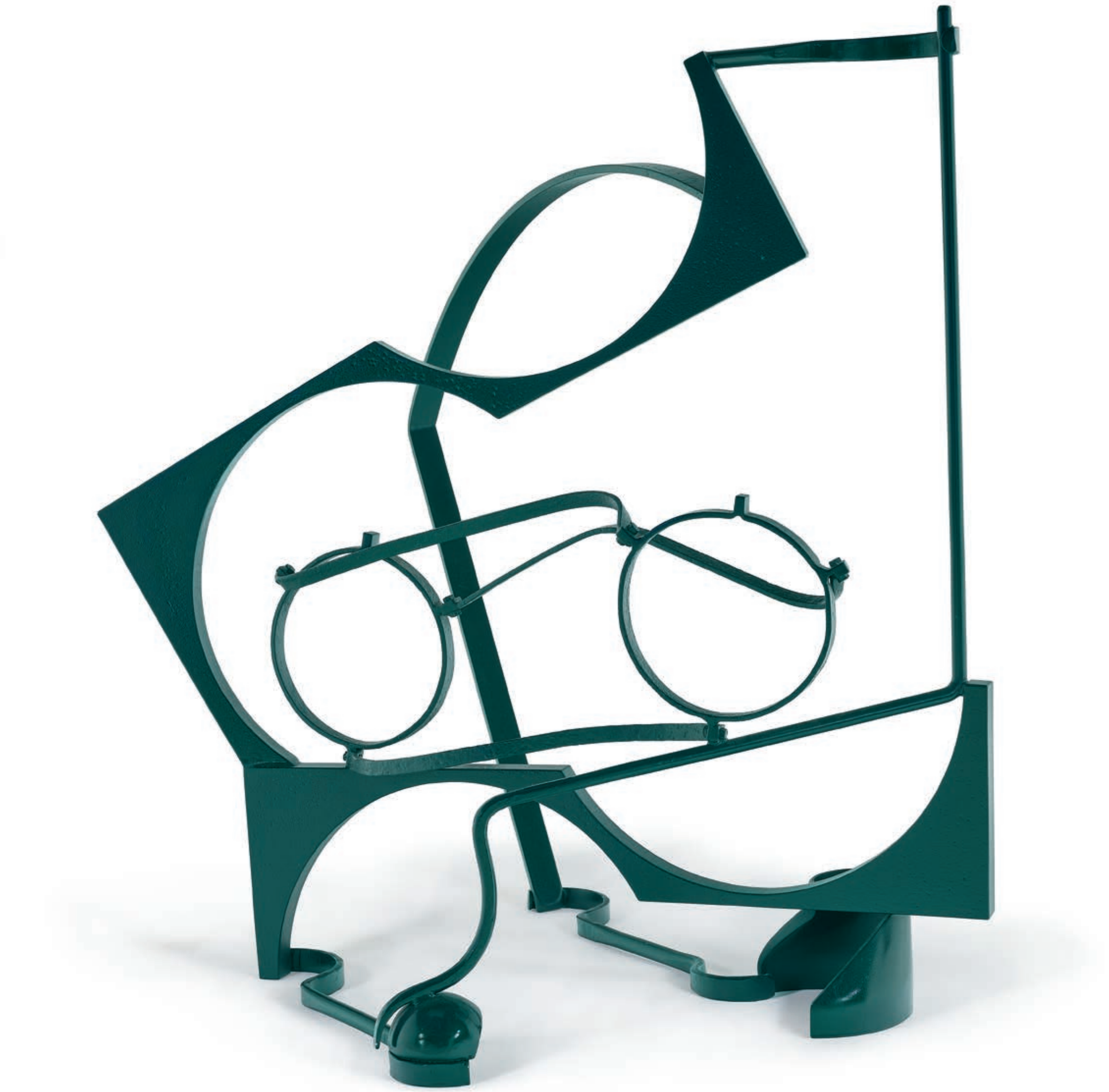
George Johnson: Recent Paintings, Charles Nodrum Gallery, Melbourne, 17 April – 6 May 1997

LITERATURE

Heathcote, C., and Zimmer, J., *George Johnson: World View*, Macmillan Art Publishing, Melbourne, 2006, p. 156 (illus.)

RELATED WORK

Red Triangle Construction, No. 13, 1989, oil on canvas, 137.5 x 122.0 cm, in the collection of the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne



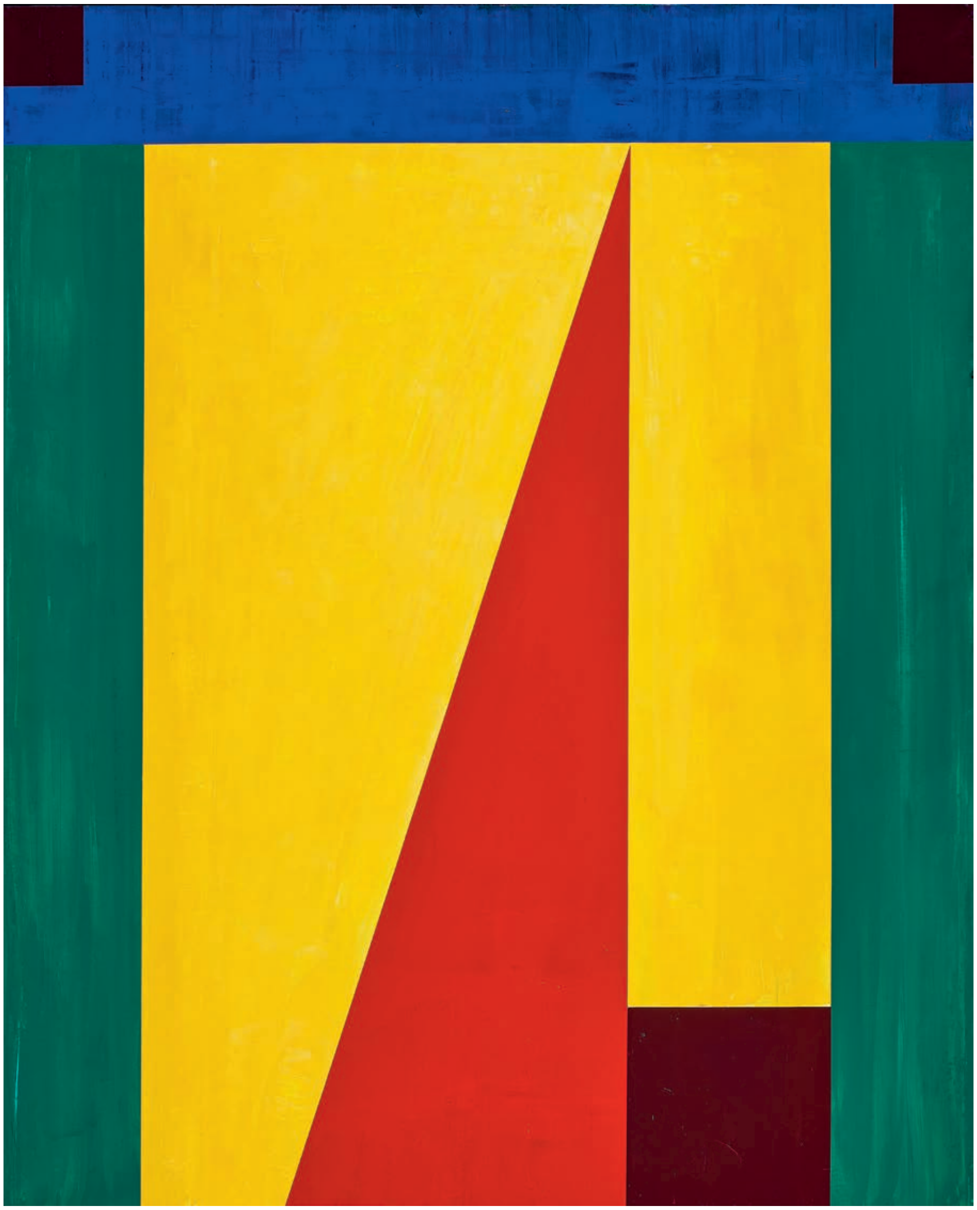
RON ROBERTSON–SWANN
born 1941
THE BLACK SWANN OF TRESPASS, 2001
welded and painted steel
112.5 x 110.0 x 64.0 cm

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

69

PROVENANCE

The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired directly from the artist in August 2002 (label attached to base)

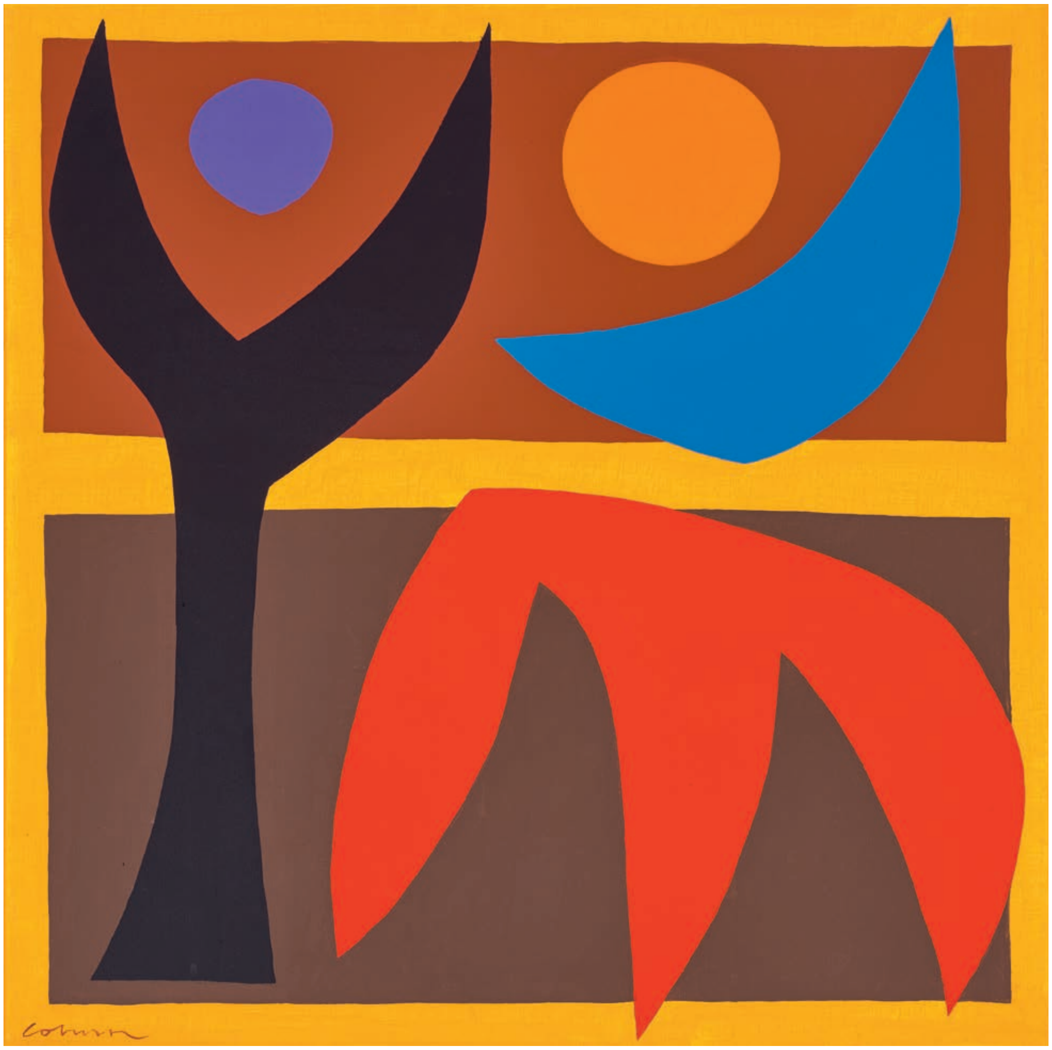


ROBERT JACKS
(1943 – 2014)
PHOENIX PARK, 1989
oil on linen
150.0 x 120.5 cm
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
jacks / 1989 / “phoenix park”

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

70

PROVENANCE
Private collection
Lawson~Menzies, Sydney, 19 June 2008, lot 270
The National Australia Bank Art Collection
(label attached verso)



JOHN COBURN
(1925 – 2006)
EARTH SONG, 1971
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
80.5 x 80.0 cm
signed lower left: Coburn
signed, dated and inscribed with title verso:
"EARTH SONG" / JOHN COBURN / PARIS 1971

ESTIMATE: $18,000 – 25,000

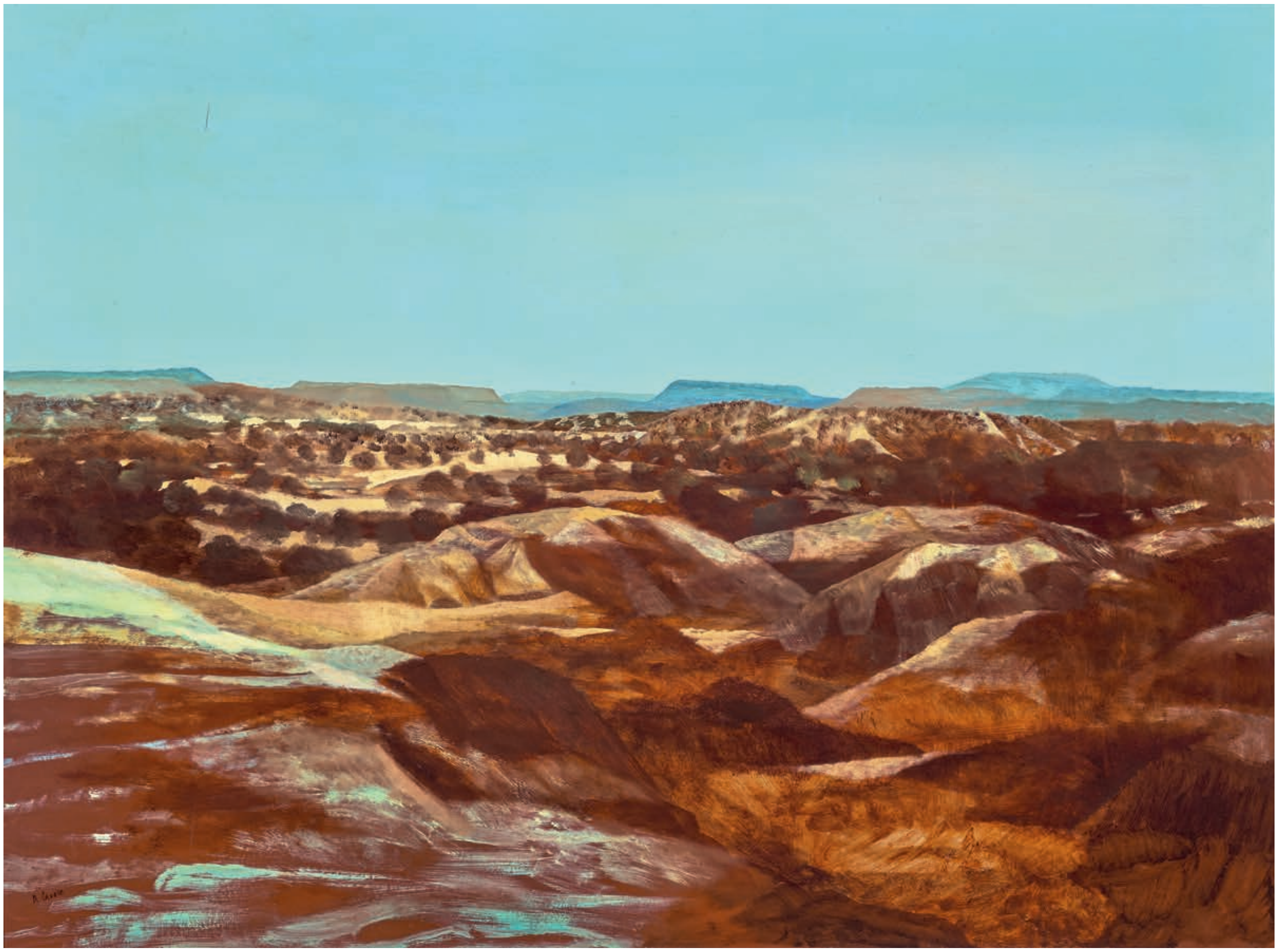
71

PROVENANCE

Probably: Bonython Art Gallery, Sydney
The National Australia Bank Art Collection,
acquired in 1972 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Probably: *Paintings and Prints sent from Paris: John Coburn*,
Bonython Art Gallery, Sydney, 22 May – 15 June 1971



RAY CROOKE
(1922 – 2015)
HAMERSLEY RANGES, WEST AUSTRALIA, 1971
oil on composition board
90.5 x 122.0 cm
signed lower left: R Crooke
inscribed with title on gallery label attached verso:
“Hamersley Ranges, West Australia, 1971” / Painted in the
Mount Newman area south of Mount Tom Price Mine.

ESTIMATE: $15,000 – 20,000

72

PROVENANCE

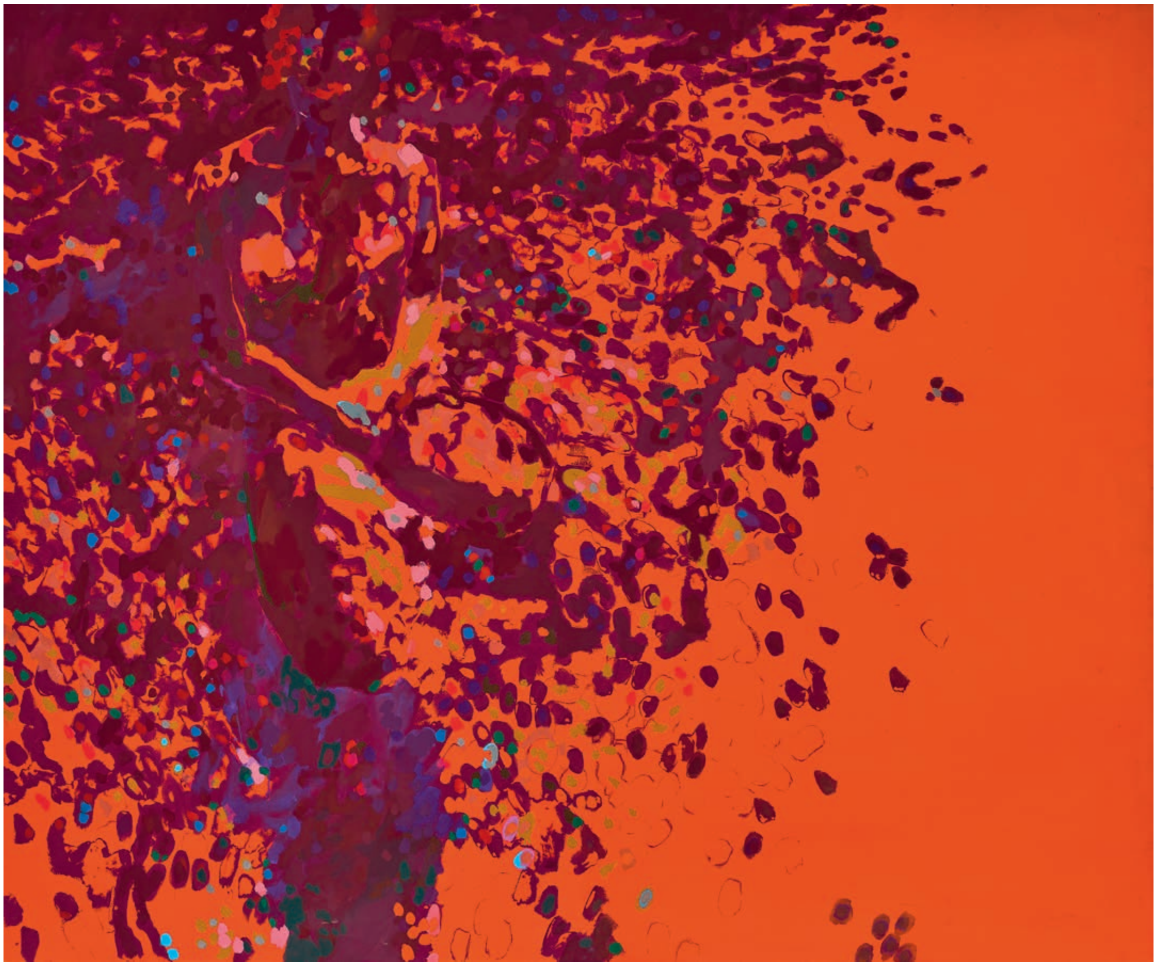
Artarmon Galleries, Sydney (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection,
acquired in 1972 (label attached verso)

EXHIBITED

Encounters with Country: The Landscapes of Ray Crooke, Cairns Regional Gallery, Queensland, September 2005 – December 2006, cat. 43 (as ‘Hammersley [sic.] Ranges, Western Australia’) and touring Mornington Regional Gallery, Victoria; S.H. Ervin Gallery, Sydney; Orange Regional Gallery, New South Wales; Queensland University Art Museum, Brisbane; and Broken Hill Regional Gallery, New South Wales

LITERATURE

Wilson, G., *Encounters with Country:*
Landscapes of Ray Crooke,
Cairns Regional Gallery, 2005, pp. 40, 47 (illus.), 69
(as ‘Hammersley Ranges, Western Australia’)



GEORGE HAYNES
born 1938
FIGURE STUDY, 1972
oil on canvas
140.0 x 167.0 cm

ESTIMATE: $10,000 – 15,000

73

PROVENANCE
Skinner Galleries, Perth (label attached verso)
The National Australia Bank Art Collection, acquired from the above in 1972 (label attached verso)

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All reference to artists make use of common and not full names in accordance with the standards outlined in the National Gallery of Australia reference publication Australian Art: Artist's working names authority list. For instance, John Brack rather than Cecil John Brack; Roy de Maistre rather than Leroy Leveson Laurent De Maistre; Rosalie Gascoigne rather than Rosalie Norah Gascoigne.

Terms used in this catalogue have the meanings ascribed to them below:

a. NICHOLAS CHEVALIER: in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, a work by the artist.
b. Attributed to NICHOLAS CHEVALIER: in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, probably a work by the artist, in whole or in part.
c. Circle of NICHOLAS CHEVALIER: in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, a work showing the influence and style of the artist and of the artist's period.
d. Studio/Workshop of NICHOLAS CHEVALIER: in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, a work possibly executed under the supervision of the artist.
e. School of NICHOLAS CHEVALIER: in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, a work by a follower or student of the artist.
f. Manner of NICHOLAS CHEVALIER: in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, a work created in the style, but not necessarily in the period, of the artist.
g. After NICHOLAS CHEVALIER: in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, a copy of a work by the artist.
h. "signed" / "dated" in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, the work has been signed/dated by the artist.
i. "bears signature" / "bears date" in the opinion of Deutscher and Hackett, the work has possibly been signed/dated by someone other than the artist.

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REGISTRATION

Bidders must register to bid prior to the commencement of an auction. Deutscher and Hackett may impose other obligations on the registration of bidders in its discretion.

CONDUCT OF AUCTION

Lots are offered for sale on a consecutive basis. Deutscher and Hackett will determine the conduct of the auction in its absolute discretion, including the regulation of bidding. Consecutive or responsive bids may be placed by the auctioneer on behalf of the vendor up to the reserve.

ABSENTEE OR COMMISSION BIDS AND TELEPHONE BIDS

As a courtesy service, Deutscher and Hackett will make reasonable efforts to place bids for prospective buyers in absentia provided written or verbal instructions (as indicated on absentee bid forms included at the back of this catalogue or online) are received 24 hours prior to auction. Where successful, lots will be purchased at the lowest possible bid and in the event of identical absentee bids, the bid received earliest will take precedence. Deutscher and Hackett accepts no responsibility for errors and omissions in relation to this courtesy service and reserves the right to record telephone bids.

RESERVE

Unless indicated otherwise, all lots are subject to a confidential reserve price determined by the vendor. Deutscher and Hackett or the auctioneer may place any number of bids on behalf of the vendor below the reserve price and is not obliged to identify that the bids are being placed on behalf of the vendor.

BIDDING INCREMENTS

Bidding usually opens below the listed pre-sale estimate and proceeds in the following increments (the auctioneer may vary the bidding increments at his or her discretion):
$500 – 1,000 by $50
$1,000 – 2,000 by $100
$2,000 – 3,000 by $200
$3,000 – 5,000 by $200 / $500 / $800
$5,000 – 10,000 by $500
$10,000 – 20,000 by $1,000
$20,000 – 30,000 by $2,000
$30,000 – 50,000 by $2,000 / $5,000 / $8,000
$50,000 – 100,000 by $5,000
$100,000 – 200,000 by $10,000
$200,000 – 300,000 by $20,000
$300,000 – 500,000 by $20,000 / $50,000 / $80,000
$500,000 – 1,000,000 by $50,000
$1,000,000+ by $100,000

SUCCESSFUL BIDS

The fall of the auctioneer's hammer indicates the final bid and the buyer assumes full responsibility for the lot from this time.

UNSOLD LOTS

Where a lot is unsold, the auctioneer will announce that the lot is "bought in", "passed", "withdrawn" or "returned to owner".

3. AFTER THE AUCTION

PAYMENTS

Payment must be made within seven days of the date of sale in Australian dollars by cash, cheque, direct deposit, approved credit cards or electronic funds transfer. If payment is made by credit card the price will increase by any merchant fees payable by Deutscher and Hackett (1.15% (including GST) for Visa and Mastercard and 1.65% (including GST) for American Express). In certain circumstances, extension of payment may be granted at the discretion of Deutscher and Hackett. Cleared funds will be held in an interest bearing trust account by Deutscher and Hackett until remitted to the vendor. Deutscher and Hackett will be entitled to retain any interest earned during this period. Payment by the vendor of any charge to Deutscher and Hackett is to be made within fourteen days of invoice.

PURCHASE PRICE AND BUYER'S PREMIUM

The purchase price will be the sum of the final bid price (including any GST) plus a buyer's premium set at 25% (inclusive of GST) of the final bid price. Buyers may be liable for other charges reasonably incurred once ownership has passed.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

Buyers are required to pay a 10% G.S.T which sum is:
a. included in the final bid prices where buying from a GST registered vendor; and
b. included in any additional fees charged by Deutscher and Hackett; and
c. included in the buyer's premium.
Where GST applies to some lots the final bid price will be inclusive of the applicable GST. If a buyer is classified as a "non-resident" for the purpose of GST, the buyer may be able to recover GST paid on the final purchase price if certain conditions are met.

COLLECTION

Lots paid for in full may be collected from Deutscher and Hackett premises the day after the auction occurs but lots paid for by cheque may not be collected until all funds have cleared. Proof of identification is required upon collection and lots not collected within seven days of the sale may incur costs associated with external storage and freight.

LOSS OR DAMAGE

Risk in the lot, including risk of loss or damage, will pass to the buyer on either the date payment is due, whether or not it has been made, or on collection by the buyer, whichever is earlier. The buyer is therefore encouraged to make arrangements to ensure comprehensive cover is maintained from the payment due date.

TRANSPORT AND SHIPPING

Deutscher and Hackett directly offers services including storage, hanging and display, appraisals and valuations, collection management and research and in all instances will endeavour to coordinate or advise upon shipping and handling, insurance, transport, framing and conservation at the request and expense of the client. Deutscher and Hackett does not accept liability for the acts or omissions of contracted third parties.

EXPORT

Prospective bidders are advised to enquire about export licences — including endangered species licences and cultural heritage permits, where relevant — prior to bidding at auction. Telephone the Cultural Property and Gifts Section, Museums Section, Ministry for the Arts, on 1800 819 461 for further information. The delay or denial of such a licence will not be grounds for a rescission of sale.

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conditions of auction and sale

ALL PARTIES ARE STRONGLY URGED TO READ THE CONDITIONS OF AUCTION AND SALE INCLUDED IN THIS CATALOGUE

The terms and conditions of business set forth below are subject to amendment by verbal or written notice prior to and during the auction and sale. They constitute the entire contractual agreement with the buyer in respect to any lot offered at auction. By bidding at auction in any manner compliant with bidding procedures, the buyer and all bidders agree to be bound by these terms and conditions and the terms of the prospective buyers and sellers guide contained in this catalogue, as amended. To the extent that an agent acts on behalf of the buyer, liability for obligations arising from these conditions of business will pass to the buyer. Multiple buyers are jointly and severally liable for obligations arising from this agreement.

DEFINITIONS

1. Definition of terms:

a. The 'buyer' refers to the party with the highest accepted bid for any lot at auction and/or such party's principal where bidding as agent.

b. The 'vendor' refers to the party consigning property for sale and/or such party's principal where acting as agent.

c. 'Deutscher and Hackett' refers to Deutscher and Hackett Pty Ltd ACN 123 119 022, its subsidiaries, officers, employees and agents.

d. The 'hammer price' refers to the final bid price (including any GST) accepted by the auctioneer, or in the case of a post-auction sale, the agreed sale price (including any GST).

e. The 'buyer's premium' refers to the 25% (inclusive of GST) payable by the buyer calculated as a percentage of the hammer price.

f. 'GST' refers to the goods and services tax imposed by the A New Tax System (Goods and Services) Act 1999 as amended.

g. The 'lot' refers to the item(s) described against any lot number in the catalogue.

h. The 'reserve' refers to the minimum price (including any GST) the consignor will accept for a lot.

PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS AND DISCLAIMER

2. Agency: Deutscher and Hackett acts as agent for the vendor and the contract of sale for the lot will be between the buyer and the vendor.

3. Property is sold 'as is': To the extent permitted by law:

a. no guarantees, warranties or representations are made (express or implied) by Deutscher and Hackett or the vendor in relation to the nature and condition of any lot; and

b. Deutscher and Hackett disclaims liability for any misrepresentations, errors or omissions, whether verbal or in writing, in the catalogue or any supplemental material.

All factual information provided by the vendor is merely passed on by Deutscher and Hackett from the vendor or other source. Deutscher and Hackett has made no attempt to verify this information. All additional statements of opinion represent the specialist opinions of Deutscher and Hackett employees and should not be relied upon as statements of fact.

4. Responsibility to inspect: Responsibility remains with the buyer to satisfy its, his or her self by inspection and evaluation prior to purchase as to the nature and condition of any property.

CONDITIONS AT AUCTION

5. Registration: Bidders must register to bid and obtain a bidder's paddle prior to the commencement of the auction. Registration requires that bidders provide proof of identity and Deutscher and Hackett may impose other obligations on the registration of bidders in its discretion.

6. Auctioneer's discretion: Deutscher and Hackett reserves the right to absolute discretion over the conduct of the auction including the regulation of bidding and its increments. This discretion extends to the challenge or rejection of any bid, the right to withdraw any lot and the right to determine the successful bidder or reoffer a lot in the event of a dispute. The prospective buyers and sellers guide details an indicative process for the conduct of auctions. All parties are strongly urged to read the prospective buyers and sellers guide included in this catalogue.

deutscherandhackett

7. Bidding: Deutscher and Hackett may sell each lot to the highest bidder at auction provided the reserve price has been met or where the net amount accounted to the vendor is at least equivalent to the net amount that would have been achieved for a sale at the reserve price. The fall of the auctioneer's hammer marks the acceptance of the highest bid and the conclusion of a contract for sale between the vendor and the buyer. Unless otherwise agreed in writing with Deutscher and Hackett, the individual physically present at the auction who signals the bid accepts personal liability to pay the purchase price, including the buyer's premium and all additional fees, taxes and charges.

GOODS AND SERVICES TAX

8. Amounts inclusive of GST: Unless otherwise specified, all amounts specified in this section as payable by the buyer, or otherwise used to calculate payment to Deutscher and Hackett, are inclusive of any GST component. Deutscher and Hackett will provide buyers with a tax invoice that meets the requirements of the Australian Taxation Office.

9. Application of GST to buyers: Buyers are required to pay a 10% GST which sum is:

a. included in the final bid prices where buying from a GST registered vendor; and
b. included in any additional fees charged by Deutscher and Hackett; and
c. included in the buyer's premium.

If a buyer is classified as a "non-resident" for the purpose of GST, the buyer may be able to recover GST paid on the final purchase price if certain conditions are met.

POST-SALE CONDITONS

10. Post auction private sale: Should the lot fail to sell at auction, Deutscher and Hackett is authorised to sell the lot privately for a period of seven days in which event this agreement shall apply to the relevant buyer to the full extent of its provisions.

11. Payment: The buyer will not acquire title until payment has cleared in full. Interest at a rate of 17.5% p.a. will be charged over outstanding accounts where no extension of terms has been granted. Interest will be payable from the payment due date. With respect to each lot purchased, the buyer agrees to make the following payments within seven days from the date of sale:

a. The hammer price.
b. In exchange for services rendered by Deutscher and Hackett, a buyer's premium calculated at 25% (inclusive of GST) of the hammer price.
c. Post sale packing, handling, shipping and storage where applicable.
d. If payment is made via Visa, Mastercard or American Express, any merchant fees payable by Deutscher and Hackett on the transaction as indicated in the prospective buyers and sellers guide.

Payment must be made within seven days of the date of sale in Australian dollars by cash, cheque, direct deposit, approved credit cards or electronic funds transfer using the form and/or trust account details provided at the back of this catalogue. In certain circumstances, extension of payment may be granted at the discretion of Deutscher and Hackett. Once funds have cleared, the proceeds of the sale less the buyer's Premium, GST and any commission or costs charged as agreed will be remitted to the vendor within thirty-five days of the date of sale provided payment has been received in full. Funds will be held in an interest bearing account by Deutscher and Hackett until remitted to the vendor. Deutscher and Hackett will be entitled to any interest earned during this period. Application for a cultural heritage export licence or any other licence in no way affects the buyer's obligation to make payment or collection within the periods specified in sections 10, 11 and 13a.

12. Risk and Title: Risk in the lot, including risk of loss or damage, will pass to the buyer on the earlier of:

a. the date payment is due, whether or not it has been made; and
b. collection by the buyer.

The buyer assumes risk for the property in all respects from this date and neither Deutscher and Hackett nor the vendor will be liable for loss or damage occurring after the payment due date. The buyer is encouraged to make arrangements to ensure comprehensive cover is maintained from this date. Title in the lot does not pass to the buyer, even if the lot is released to the buyer, until the buyer has paid all sums owing to Deutscher and Hackett. If a buyer makes a claim against Deutscher and Hackett for damage or loss after sale, the buyer's premium and the final bid price shall be payable notwithstanding.

13. Freight:

a. The buyer may only remove a lot from the Deutscher and Hackett premises once payment has been cleared in full and must be removed no later than seven days after the date of sale. Should items not be removed by this time, storage and insurance costs may be charged to the buyer. If a lot has not been collected within 30 days after the date of sale and alternative arrangements have not been with Deutscher and Hackett, the lot may be re-sold by Deutscher and Hackett without reserve at the next auction and Deutscher and Hackett may set off any amounts owed for storage and insurance costs and its standard commission before remitting the proceeds to the buyer.
b. Buyers are required to make their own arrangements for packing, handling, shipping and transit insurance for their property. Deutscher and Hackett does not accept responsibility or liability for the acts or omissions of any third party, such as a shipping agent, whether or not such a party has been recommended or suggested by Deutscher and Hackett.

14. Limited Warranty of Authorship: If a buyer is able to establish that a lot is a forgery in accordance with these conditions for sale within one year of the date of sale, the buyer shall be entitled to rescind the sale and obtain a refund of the hammer price from the vendor. The buyer must return the lot in the state in which it was sold within fourteen days of notifying Deutscher and Hackett of the forgery allegations. For a lot to be established as a forgery, the following conditions must be satisfied:

a. the buyer must supply two independent expert testimonies attesting to the forgery. Deutscher and Hackett is entitled to request further expert evidence where it deems the evidence provided to be unsatisfactory;
b. there must be no conflict of opinion among accepted experts in the field; and
c. the forgery must be able to be proven through means that at the time of publication of the catalogue were commonly employed and that will not damage or otherwise put the lot in jeopardy.

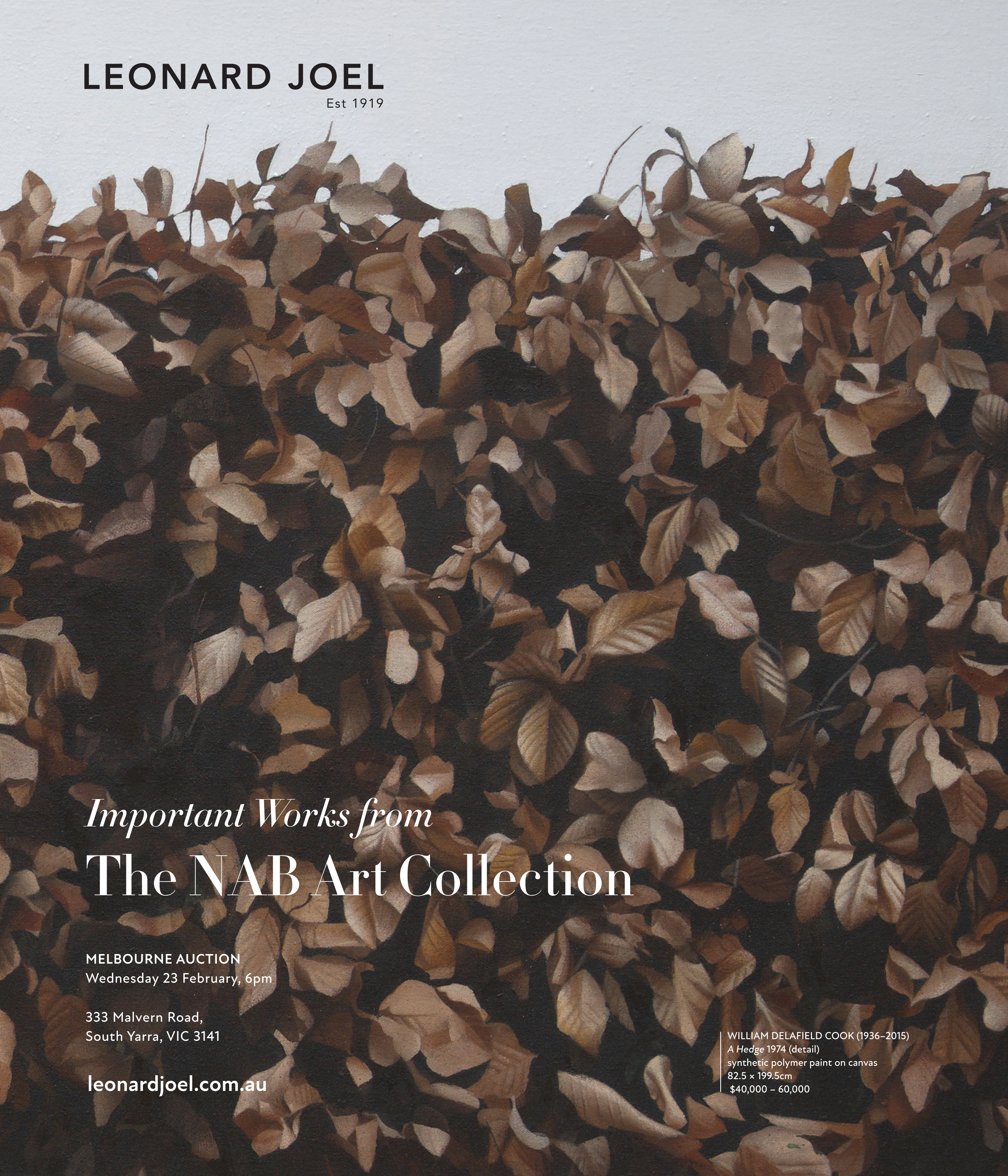
The limited warranty and the right to rescind the sale is not assignable and the buyer must have retained title to the lot without disposing of any interest in it up until the buyer notifies Deutscher and Hackett of the forgery allegations. The buyer acknowledges that it has no rights directly against Deutscher and Hackett if a lot is established to be a forgery.

15. Termination, Breach and Legalities:

a. Deutscher and Hackett breach: To the extent permitted by law, the sole and maximum remedy to a buyer for breach of warranty is a refund of original purchase price, including buyer's premium. In such an event the sale contract shall be rescinded and all costs associated with returning the property (in the state in which it was sold) to the premises of Deutscher and Hackett are to be borne by the buyer. Deutscher and Hackett is not liable for any indirect or consequential loss or damage for any matter arising directly or indirectly as a result of the sale.
b. Buyer breach: Deutscher and Hackett may, in addition to other remedies available by law, exercise one or more of the following rights or remedies for breach:
    i. Cancel the sale and retain any payment or property in Deutscher and Hackett custody as collateral or liquidated damages.
    ii. Charge the buyer interest at the rate of 2% above the rate fixed under section 2 of the Penalty Interest Rates Act 1984 (Vic).
    iii. Resell the property without reserve at the next auction or privately on five days notice. Any disparity between sale and resale prices, including associated costs such as, but not limited to, legal, storage and sale expenses, will be to the account of the defaulting buyer.
    iv. Apply any part payment received from the buyer in respect of any lots at its discretion.
    v. Retain any of the buyer's property held by Deutscher and Hackett until the buyer has satisfied its obligations to Deutscher and Hackett.
    vi. Take any other action Deutscher and Hackett deems necessary or appropriate.
    vii. Refuse to permit the buyer to participate in future auctions.
    viii. Provide the vendor with the buyer's details to permit the vendor to take action against the buyer to recover the money.

16. Governing law and jurisdiction: These terms and conditions and any matters concerned with the foregoing fall within the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of the state in which the auction is held.

17. Severability: In the event that any provisions of this agreement should be found unenforceable in a court of law, that part shall be discounted and the remaining conditions shall continue in full force and effect to the extent permitted by law.



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Est 1919

Important Works from

The NAB Art Collection

MELBOURNE AUCTION
Wednesday 23 February, 6pm

333 Malvern Road,
South Yarra, VIC 3141

leonardjoel.com.au

WILLIAM DELAFIELD COOK (1936–2015)
A Hedge 1974 (detail)
synthetic polymer paint on canvas
82.5 × 199.5cm
$40,000 – 60,000

TELEPHONE BID FORM

SALE CODE: NAB
SALE NO.: 067
NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK COLLECTION
SELECTED AUSTRALIAN FINE ART

MELBOURNE AUCTION
22 FEBUARY, 7:00 PM
LOTS 1 — 73
105 COMMERCIAL ROAD
SOUTH YARRA
VIC 3141

(Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss) Name (please print)

Billing address (PO Box insufficient)

Address

City State Post Code

1. 2.
Telephone numbers for auction date in order of preference

Facsimile Email

Signature (required) Date

please email, post or fax
this completed form to:

DEUTSCHER AND HACKETT
105 COMMERCIAL ROAD
SOUTH YARRA
VIC 3141

tel: 03 9865 6333
fax: 03 9865 6344

info@deutscherandhackett.com

	LOT NO.	ARTIST/TITLE	COVER BID*
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

*Not including buyer's premium or GST (where applicable). Bids are made in Australian dollars.

	INTERNAL USE ONLY
RECEIVED BY	
DATE	
TIME	

Please refer to the Prospective Buyers and Sellers Guide and the Conditions of Auction and Sale in this catalogue for information regarding sales.

By completing this form, I authorise DEUTSCHER AND HACKETT to contact me by telephone on the contact number(s) nominated. I understand it is my responsibility to enquire whether any Sale-Room Notices relate to any lot on which I intend to bid. I also understand that should my bid(s) be successful, a buyer's premium of 25% (inclusive of GST), will be added to the final hammer price.
I accept that DEUTSCHER AND HACKETT provides this complimentary service as a courtesy to its clients, that there are inherent risks to telephone bidding, and I will not hold DEUTSCHER AND HACKETT responsible for any error.

deutscherandhackett

ABSENTEE BID FORM

(Mr/Mrs/Ms/Miss) Name (please print)

Billing address (PO Box insufficient)

Address

City State Post Code

Telephone Business/Mobile

Facsimile Email

Signature (required) Date

SALE CODE: NAB
SALE NO.: 067
NATIONAL AUSTRALIA BANK COLLECTION
SELECTED AUSTRALIAN FINE ART

MELBOURNE AUCTION
22 FEBUARY, 7:00 PM
LOTS 1 — 73
105 COMMERCIAL ROAD
SOUTH YARRA
VIC 3141

please email, post or fax
this completed form to:

DEUTSCHER AND HACKETT
105 COMMERCIAL ROAD
SOUTH YARRA
VIC 3141

tel: 03 9865 6333
fax: 03 9865 6344

info@deutscherandhackett.com

	LOT NO.	ARTIST/TITLE	MAXIMUM BID*
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

*Not including buyer's premium or GST (where applicable). Bids are made in Australian dollars.

Absentee bids must be received a minimum of twenty-four hours prior to auction. All absentee bids received will be confirmed by phone or fax. In the event that confirmation is not received, please resubmit or contact our office.

Please refer to the Prospective Buyers and Sellers Guide and the Conditions of Auction and Sale in this catalogue for information regarding sales. By completing this form, absentee bidders request and authorise DEUTSCHER AND HACKETT to place the following bids acting as agent on their behalf up to and including the maximum bid specified. Lots will be bought at the lowest possible bid authorised by a bidder in absentia.

Should the bid be successful, the buyer will be obliged to pay the final bid price plus buyer's premium of 25% (inclusive of GST) of the final bid price. DEUTSCHER AND HACKETT provides this complimentary service as a courtesy to clients and does not accept liability for errors and omissions in the execution of absentee bids.

	INTERNAL USE ONLY
RECEIVED BY	
DATE	
TIME	

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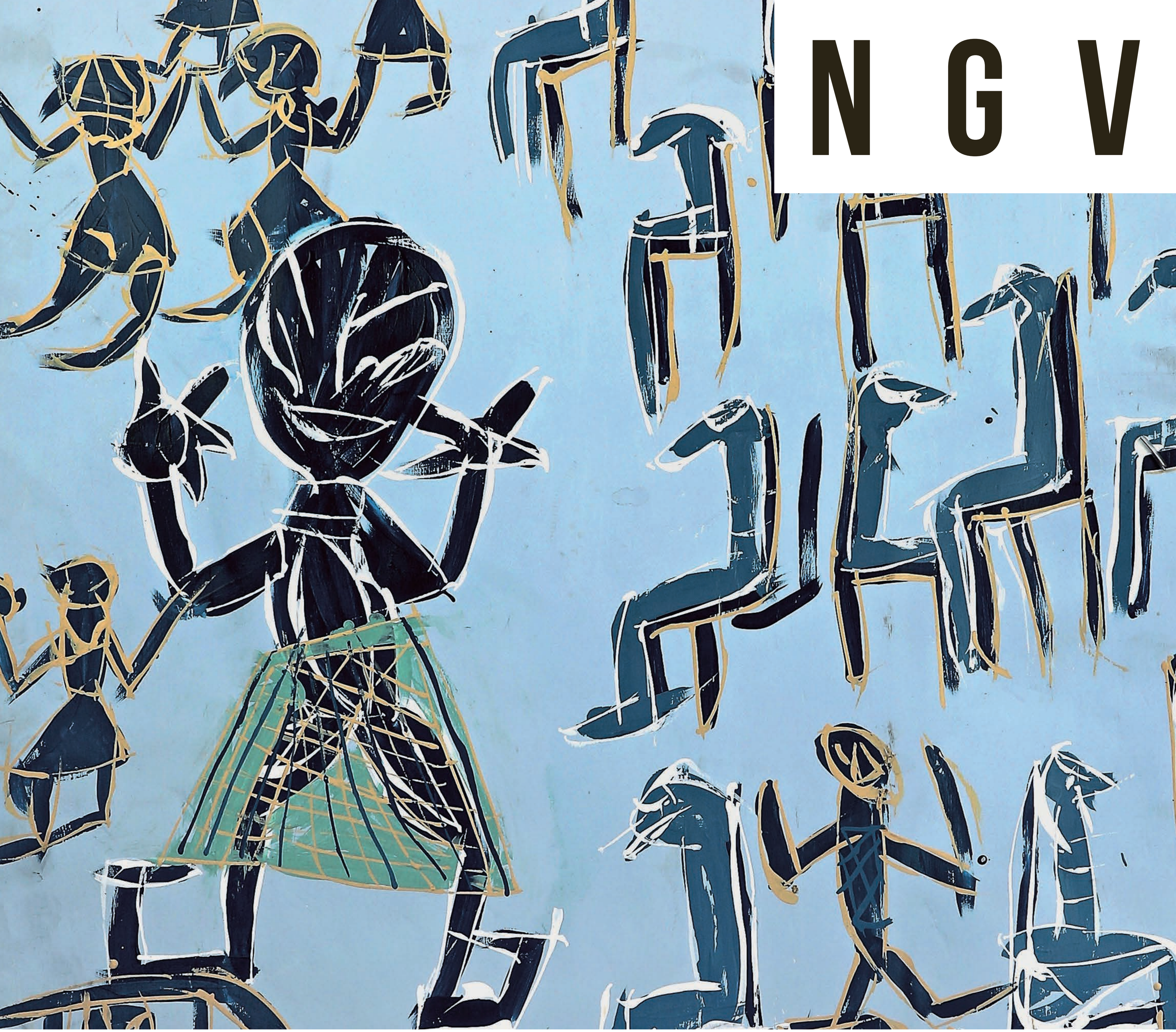

BARK LADIES

ELEVEN ARTISTS FROM YIRRKALA

NOW SHOWING
FREE ENTRY

EXHIBITION PARTNER MAJOR PATRON SUPPORTERS

Buku
LISA FOX
Australian Government
Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support
MIMCO
Dulux

This exhibition has been developed by the NGV and Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre

The NGV and Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre receive funding through the Australian Government's Indigenous Visual Arts Industry Support Program

Dhambit Munuŋgurr *Order* 2021 (detail)
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.
Purchased with funds donated by
Janet Whiting AM and Phil Lukies, 2021.
© Dhambit Munuŋgurr, courtesy of
Buku-Larrŋgay Mulka Centre, Yirrkala

CREATIVE VICTORIA

Artist: Mary-Jane Walker

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CONTEMPORARY
BARWON PARK REIMAGINED

DISCOVER BARWON PARK
THROUGH THE CREATIVE
VISION OF 12 ARTISTS,
WHOSE INSTALLATIONS
INTERROGATE THE SITE
15 JANUARY – 24 APRIL

nationaltrust.org.au 105 Inverleigh Rd Winchelsea

National Trust | Barwon Park

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Free/State
Free/State
Free/State
Free/State
Free/State
Free/State

FREE / STATE

2022 Adelaide Biennial of Australian Art
4 March – 5 June 2022

Art Gallery of South Australia / agsa.sa.gov.au

Principal Donor

THE BALNAVES FOUNDATION

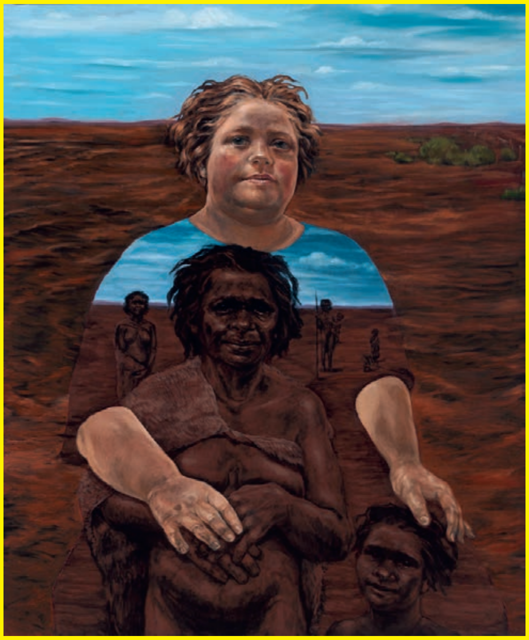
In Association with

Australian Government
Australia Council for the Arts
Government of South Australia
SOUTH AUSTRALIA
ADELAIDE FESTIVAL AF

AGSA

Presented in association with the Adelaide Festival, and with generous support received from the Art Gallery of South Australia Biennial Ambassadors Program and Principal Donor The Balnaves Foundation. This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body and by the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy, an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments.

WE ARE EVER PRESENT



Ever Present
First Peoples Art of Australia

Until 18 April – Free
weareeverpresent.com

AGWA

Presented By
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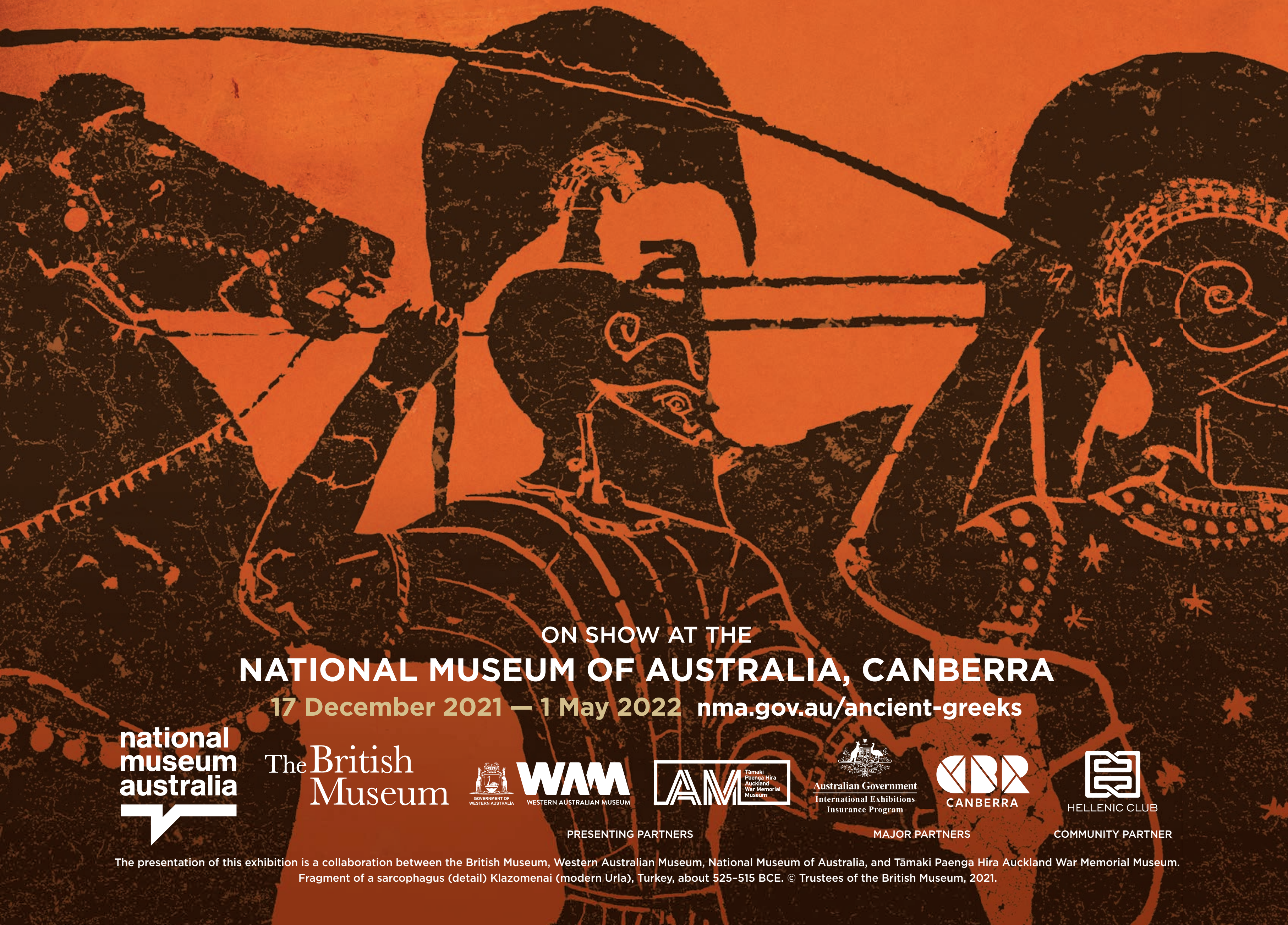
AGWA Principal Partner
Touring Partner
Australian Government
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications
Government of Western Australia
Simon Lee Foundation
To champion the human spirit
EY
Singapore Airlines
ALEX HOTEL
JUNIPER
Otherside
7
The West Australian
JCDecaux

Ever Present: First Peoples Art of Australia is a National Gallery Touring Exhibition in partnership with Wesfarmers Arts and supported by the Australian Government through the Office for the Arts.
Julie Dowling, Badimaya people, *Self-portrait: in our country*, 2002, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, courtesy of Artplace.

ANCIENT GREEKS

ATHLETES, WARRIORS AND HEROES

FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM



ON SHOW AT THE

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AUSTRALIA, CANBERRA

17 December 2021 — 1 May 2022 nma.gov.au/ancient-greeks

national museum australia

The British Museum

GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

WAM WESTERN AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM

AM Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum

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Australian Government International Exhibitions Insurance Program

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HELLENIC CLUB

COMMUNITY PARTNER

The presentation of this exhibition is a collaboration between the British Museum, Western Australian Museum, National Museum of Australia, and Tāmaki Paenga Hira Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Fragment of a sarcophagus (detail) Klazomenai (modern Urla), Turkey, about 525–515 BCE. © Trustees of the British Museum, 2021.

McClelland Sculpture Park+Gallery is the home of Australian sculpture, located 45 minutes from Melbourne. With a wide-ranging collection of more than 100 sculptures, the park comprises eight hectares of designed landscape and vast areas of indigenous Australian bushland. The gallery exhibition program focuses on the development of modern sculpture and various forms of spatial practice, and encourages contemporary artists to address challenging issues in an Australian and global context.

Tuesday to Sunday 10am – 5pm
390 McClelland Drive
Langwarrin VIC 3910
03 9789 1671

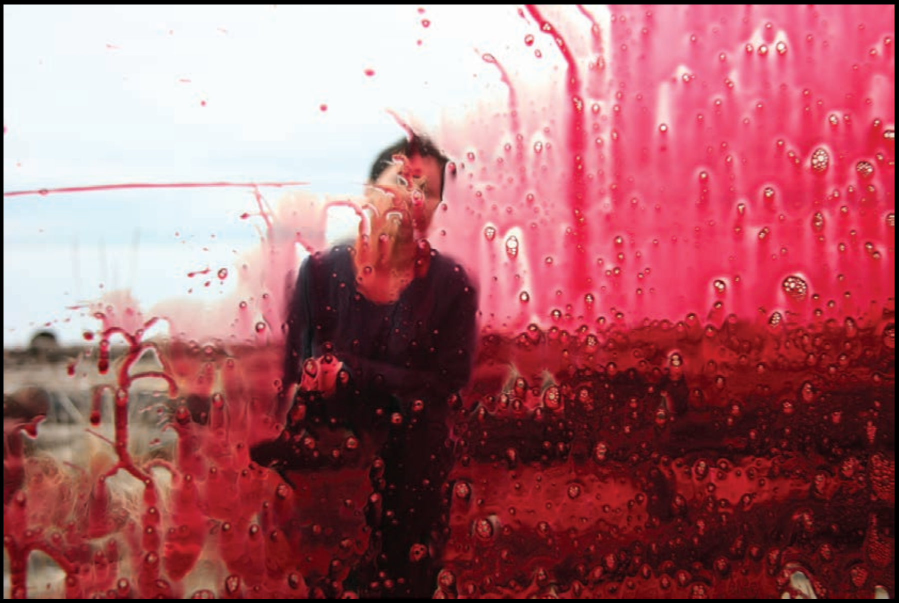
50 YEARS

CREATIVE VICTORIA

McClelland
SCULPTURE PARK+GALLERY

Image: McClelland Sculpture Park+Gallery, photo Mark Chew.

Rebecca Belmore



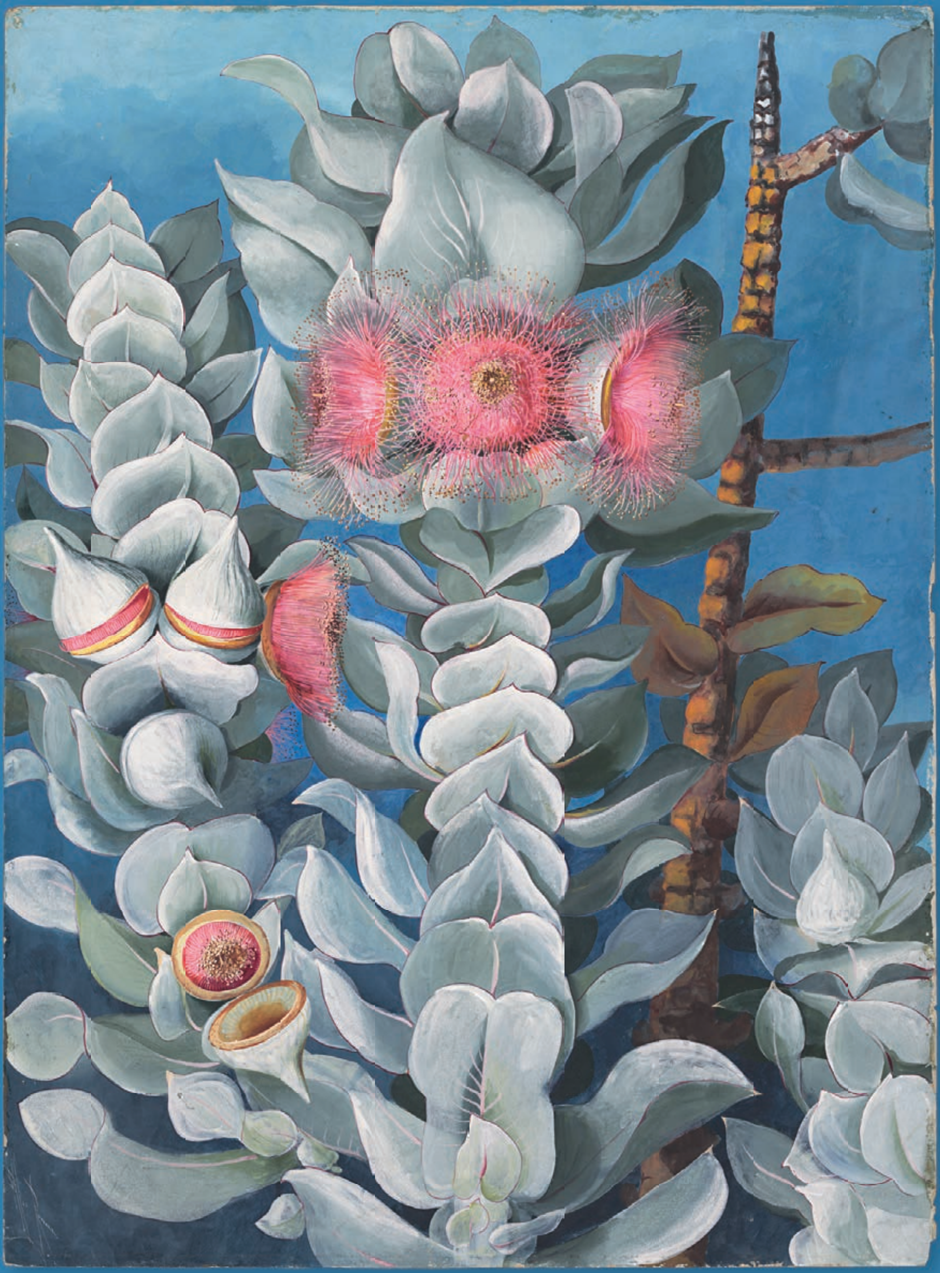
Turbulent Water

NOW SHOWING AT BUXTON CONTEMPORARY
10.12.21–08.05.22
Wednesday – Sunday: 11am–5pm

Rebecca Belmore *Fountain* 2005 (still)
Collection: Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto
Image courtesy the artist

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
BUXTON CONTEMPORARY
Griffith UNIVERSITY Art Museum

NLA Treasures



Discover highlights from your National Library's collection

Ellis Rowan

Eucalyptus macrocarpa Hook., family Myrtaceae, Western Australia, 1880s, nla.cat-vn568001

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF AUSTRALIA

Treasures Gallery
Open Daily | 9am–5pm | Entry Free
National Library of Australia, Canberra
nla.gov.au/treasures

The Library warmly thanks our Treasures Gallery supporters. Their generosity has made it possible to bring these treasures to life for the whole community.

SHAKESPEARE RUBENS WARHOL HOCKNEY TO GAINSBOROUGH RODIN EMIN WINEHOUSE

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ORGANISING PARTNER
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BELL SHAKESPEARE

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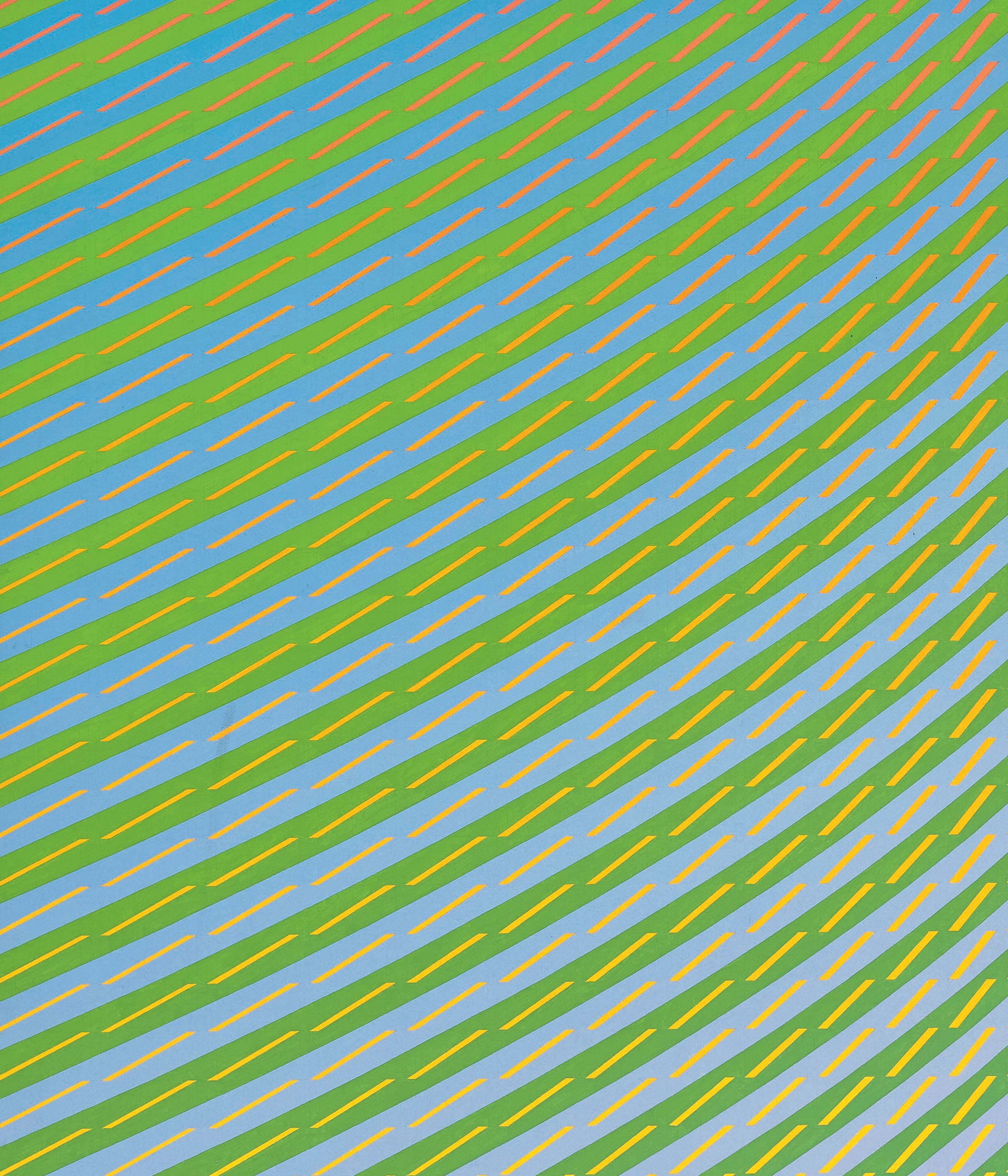

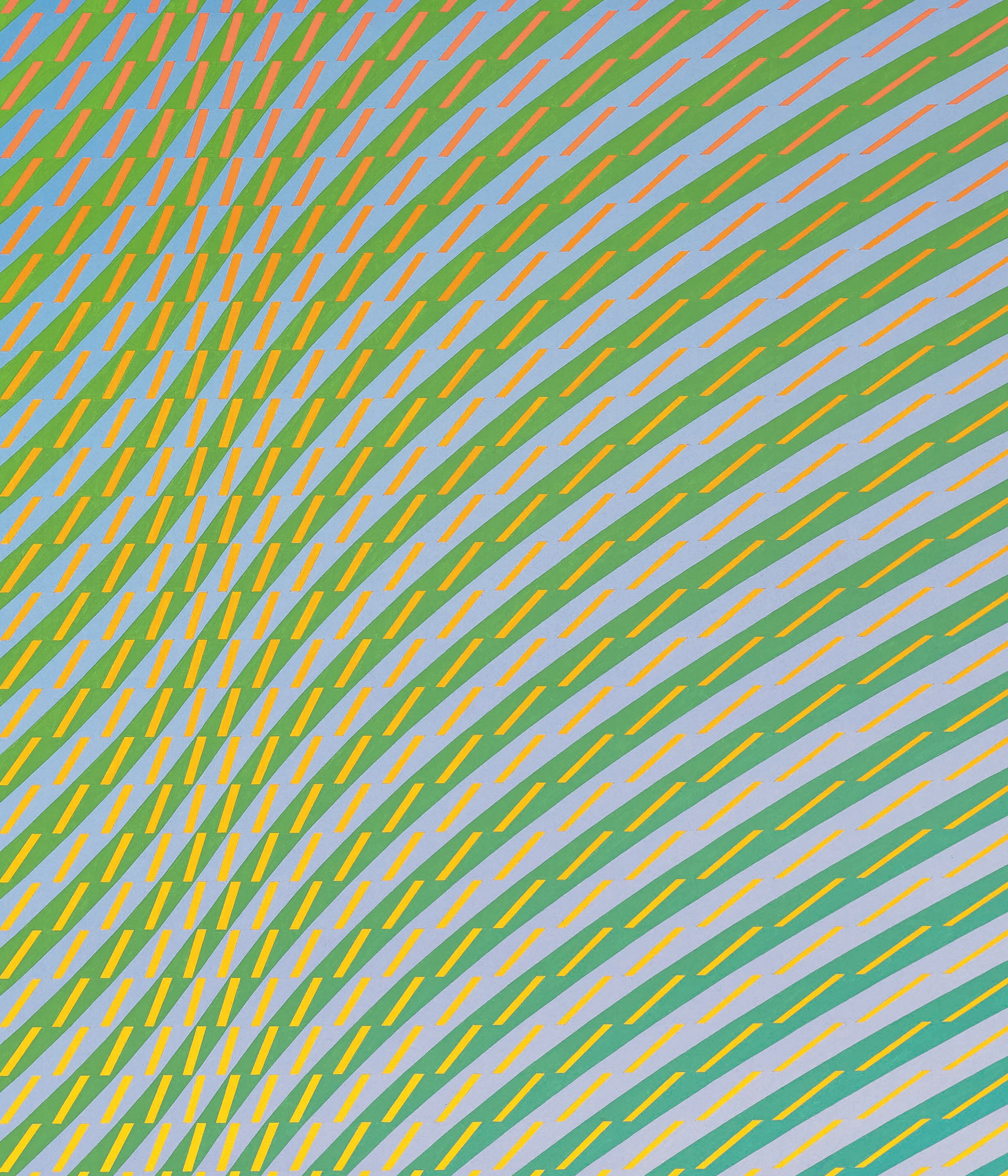

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